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# SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 3 SEPTEMBER 2025 | WEDNESDAY | BENGALURU | 10 RABIUL AWWAL, 1447 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 241 | Pages: 8

## 1,000 dead after landslide wipes out Sudan village

**CAIRO, 2 SEPT**

A devastating landslide has wiped out the entire village of Tarasin in Sudan's Central Darfur, killing more than 1,000 people, according to the Sudan Liberation Movement-Army (SLM-A). The tragedy occurred on Sunday in the Marrah Mountains following days of heavy rainfall in late August. In a statement released Monday, the rebel group said, "Initial information indicates the death of all village residents, estimated to be more than one thousand people. Only one person survived." This is one of the deadliest natural disasters in Sudan's recent history and comes amid an ongoing civil war. The country has been in turmoil since April 2023, when fighting erupted between the military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.—*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 6***

## DRI imposes Rs 102 cr penalty on Ranya Rao

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence has imposed a fine of Rs 102 crore on Kannada film actress Ranya Rao in a gold smuggling case, the DRI sources said on Tuesday. Along with her, the DRI imposed a penalty of Rs 63 crore on hotelier Tarun Kondaraju and Rs 56 crore each on jewellers Sahil Sakaria Jain and Bharat Kumar Jain.—*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 2***

## HC denies bail to Imam, Umar Khalid & 7 others

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday denied bail to Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and seven others in the 2020 northeast Delhi riots conspiracy case under the UAPA. The court upheld a trial court's order, stating the violence was a "well-planned conspiracy." Following the verdict, Khalid's partner Banjyotsana Lahiri said the Supreme Court is now their only option. JNUSU announced a protest march on September 13, marking five years since Khalid's arrest. JNUSU president Nitish Kumar alleged student activists were being targeted while real culprits walk free. Khalid, arrested in September 2020, had received interim bail twice. The prosecution cited speeches referencing CAA, NRC, and Kashmir as evidence of incitement.—*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 4***

# Goodbye BBMP: B'luru gets 5 new corporations under GBA

## Maheshwar Rao is appointed as Chief Commissioner of GBA

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday announced the formal establishment of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), marking the end of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). Describing it as a "historic decision", he said the move aims to decentralise governance and accelerate development.

Bengaluru North City Corporation
Bengaluru West City Corporation
Bengaluru Central City Corporation
Bengaluru East City Corporation
Bengaluru South City Corporation

**The GBA includes five new City corporations:**

- Bengaluru Central.
- Bengaluru North.
- Bengaluru South.
- Bengaluru East.
- Bengaluru West.

**Each corporation will be led by an IAS commissioner with immediate effect. The State government has issued a notification transferring key officers from BBMP to GBA:**

- Maheshwar Rao M (1995 batch IAS) is appointed as Chief Commissioner of GBA and Administrator for all five corporations.
- Munish Moudgil (1998): Special Commissioner (Admin, Revenue & IT).
- Suralkar Vikas Kishor (2012): Special Commissioner (Health & Education).
- Harish Kumar K. (2012): Special Commissioner (Finance), also CFO.
- Preeti Gehlot (2016): Special Commissioner (FECC, Elections, Disaster Management, PR & Coordination).

**Post equivalence has been notified:**

- The Chief Commissioner role is equivalent to Additional Chief Secretary.
- Admin, Revenue & IT Commissioner aligns with Principal Secretary, while others match the Director of Municipal Administration rank.

**Additionally, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Task Force has been restructured under GBA:**

- Roopa D., IPS: ADGP
- Mutharaju M., IPS: SP

The GBA will be chaired by the Chief Minister, with the Bengaluru in-charge minister as Vice-Chair. Each corporation will include an IAS commissioner, KAS joint commissioner, and a chief engineer.

The City will now be divided into 50 divisions and 150 subdivisions, with a cap of 150 wards per corporation. The reorganisation is expected to produce 500 new elected representatives. Poll dates will be announced after ward reservation (by 30 November) and final notification (by 1 November).

GBA will oversee Citywide projects, while corporations and 14-member ward committees will manage local governance. —*Salar News*

# SC says Governors can't withhold bills indefinitely

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

A majority of Supreme Court judges have observed that Governors cannot withhold assent to Bills passed by State Assemblies indefinitely.

Chief Justice of India BR Gavai said Governors cannot delay action on Bills endlessly, while Justice B.V. Nagarathna added that "no organ can impair the functioning of the Constitution." Justice Vikram Nath noted the Governor cannot "sit over the wisdom of the legislature indefinitely."

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal emphasised that the process should be a collaborative exercise, the Governor may return a Bill with suggested amendments, but cannot stonewall legislative intent.

The observations came on the sixth day of hearings on a Presidential reference under Article 143(1). In May, President Droupadi Murmu had sought the court's opinion on whether judicial timelines can be imposed on the President's discretion regarding State Bills.

Tamil Nadu's counsel, Abhishek Singhvi, argued that the Centre claimed the actions of the Governor and President were beyond judicial review. However, the bench cited the Minerva Mills verdict, affirming that judicial review is part of the Constitution's basic structure. The hearing resumes Wednesday. —*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 4***

# KCR suspends Kavitha from BRS

**HYDERABAD, 2 SEPT**

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) on Tuesday suspended MLC K Kavitha from the party for alleged anti-party activities, a day after she publicly accused her cousins and senior leaders T Harish Rao and J Santosh Kumar of tarnishing party chief K Chandrasekhar Rao's (KCR) image over the Kaleshwaram project.

BRS General Secretaries T Ravinder Rao and Soma Bharat Kumar said in a statement that Kavitha's recent conduct was damaging the party and that the leadership had taken serious note of it.

On September 1, Kavitha reacted to the Congress government's announcement of a CBI probe into the Kaleshwaram project by alleging that Harish Rao and Santosh Kumar misused KCR's name for personal gain, resulting in corruption allegations against the former chief minister.

She further claimed Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was backing her cousins and accused them of clandestine dealings with contractors while KCR was focused on public welfare.

Kavitha has been vocal against unnamed party leaders for months, while also conducting parallel political activities under the banner of 'Telangana Jagruti', a cultural organisation she heads.

Internal discord in BRS became public in May when Kavitha objected to a leaked letter she wrote to KCR about party affairs, claiming conspiracies were at play and likening KCR to a God surrounded by "devils".

Her brother and BRS working president KT Rama Rao had then urged that internal issues be discussed within party forums.

Last month, she was removed as honorary president of the BRS-affiliated union in Singareni Collieries, a move she openly criticised. —*PTI*

# Modi to visit Manipur on 13 Sept

**AIZAWL, 2 SEPT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to visit violence-hit Manipur on 13 September, marking his first visit in two years, officials in Aizawl said. However, the final itinerary is yet to be confirmed. This visit comes two months ahead of the Bihar elections.

The visit comes after the state witnessed prolonged ethnic violence beginning May 3, 2023, following protests by the Kuki-Zo tribes against a High Court recommendation to grant Scheduled Tribe status to the Meiteis. The unrest led to the deaths of at least 260 people and displaced thousands, deepening the divide between the valley-based Meiteis and hill-dwelling Kuki-Zo communities.

An indication of the upcoming visit emerged from a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Puneet Kumar Goel on Sunday, described as a "preparatory meeting for the proposed VVIP visit in September 2025." Police have been instructed to secure two key locations: Kangla Fort in Imphal and Peace Ground in Churachandpur, a Kuki-majority district.

The DGP has issued orders cancelling all leave for police personnel between September 7 and 14, except in extreme emergencies.

Public reaction is mixed. While some say the visit is "too late," Ginza Vualzong of the Kuki Zo Council expressed hope that Modi will meet community leaders. —*PTI*

**SIRI SAYS HI TO NAMMA B'LURU**

People throng Apple Hebbal, the first Apple retail store in South India, which opened at Phoenix Mall of Asia on Bellary Road in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

## ED probes Dharmasthala 'foreign funding'

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

The Enforcement Directorate has initiated a preliminary investigation into the allegations of dubious foreign funding used to fuel communal conspiracies during the ongoing Dharmasthala row, officials said on Tuesday.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated a preliminary investigation under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), and further action will be taken if the probe finds proof of foreign funding rule violation and illicit use of funds, the sources said.

The sources said that the agency is gathering facts and documents related to all entities and stakeholders, including some NGOs, who are alleged to have used suspect funds to stoke controversy. This comes after the State BJP held a massive "Dharmasthala Chalo" rally on Monday to condemn the alleged conspiracy and smear campaign against the temple town. —*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 2***

# Govt accepts Maratha quota demand

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange breaks his hunger strike after the government accepts his demands in Mumbai on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Activist Manoj Jarange on Tuesday ended his five-day hunger strike after the Maharashtra government agreed to key demands related to Maratha reservation, including granting Kunbi caste certificates to eligible Marathas, enabling them to claim reservation benefits under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category.

Jarange accepted a glass of fruit juice from senior BJP minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil — who heads the cabinet sub-committee on Maratha reservation — and other panel members at Mumbai's Azad Maidan, where the protest had been ongoing since August 29.

The 43-year-old activist broke down in tears as jubilant supporters cheered the outcome, while Mumbaikars, who had been facing disruptions due to the agitation, welcomed the resolution.

Before ending his fast, Jarange declared the protest a "victory" after ministers personally conveyed the government's acceptance of his demands. The announcement sparked celebrations at the site.

The decision to issue Kunbi certificates — historically linked to the OBC category — to eligible Marathas is a significant move in the ongoing struggle for reservation. The Maharashtra government's acceptance is seen as a major political and social development in the state's complex quota politics. —*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 3***

**SEMICONDUCTOR BOOST**

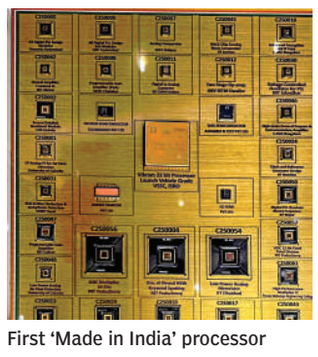
# *Vikram 3,201: India unveils 1st fully indigenous 32-bit chip*

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

India on Tuesday unveiled its first fully indigenous 32-bit microprocessor, Vikram 3,201, developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Revealed at a major semiconductor event in Delhi, the chip marks a significant milestone in the country's 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) push.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, returning from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in China, described microprocessors as "digital diamonds", stating, "If the last century was shaped by oil, this one is by a small chip."

Microprocessors are essential to modern life, powering everything from watches and smartphones to cars and medical equipment. With Vikram 3201, India takes a crucial step towards becoming a global player in the semiconductor race, alongside Taiwan, China, South Korea, and the United States.



First 'Made in India' processor

The Vikram 3,201 features a custom instruction set architecture (ISA), enabling it to process 32 bits of data at a time. It offers high-level support for the Ada programming language, widely used in satellites, air traffic control, and launch vehicles. Engineered for harsh environments, it can withstand temperatures ranging from -55 to 125°C, ideal for space applications. Developed in just 3.5 years, Vikram is poised to support a broader electronics ecosystem, including giants like Apple and Samsung, India's $240 billion automotive sector, and the $18 billion consumer electronics industry. —*PTI*

***>>>More on Page 7***

## Azerbaijan says India blocked SCO seat over Pak ties

**WASHINGTON, 2 SEPT**

Azerbaijan has accused India of seeking "revenge" against Baku on international platforms due to its close relationship with Pakistan. This allegation follows claims that India blocked Azerbaijan's bid for full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Azerbaijani media has suggested that India's actions violate the principles of "multilateral diplomacy," linking New Delhi's decision to Baku's support for Pakistan during the Operation Sindoor.

In a meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Tianjin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev congratulated Islamabad on what he described as Pakistan's victory over India in a recent military conflict. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

## Rajanna's son says DKS looking to join BJP

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

Congress MLA HC Balakrishna on Tuesday claimed that senior party leader and legislator KN Rajanna, who was recently sacked from as the cooperative minister, was preparing to join BJP in the days ahead.

However, Rajanna's son and Congress MLC R Rajendra hit back, stating that Balakrishna was part of a team that may jump ship to BJP for the sake of power and chief minister post for their leader.

Rajendra also took a dig at Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar while alleging conspiracy against his father Rajanna.

The development continues to expose the internal power struggle within the ruling Congress.

"Everyone knows how Rajanna conducted and spoke when he was the minister, it is because of that he lost his minister post... Rajanna has applied to join BJP," Balakrishna said. "He (Rajanna) is still in Congress as the party is in power. He has already taken one step out of the party."

Hitting back, Rajendra noted that Balakrishna was with other parties before joining the Congress. He said Balakrishna was making such comments with an expectation of getting the minister post during the cabinet reshuffle.

Asked about former BJP leader and Bijapur City MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal's recent claim that Shivakumar's one leg is towards the BJP, he said, "It is the same September revolution that Rajanna had predicted."

Shivakumar suprised everyone recently by singing the RSS anthem in the State Assembly, which he later apologised for after backlash from his party.

Rajendra also said that his father was targeted for supporting CM Siddaramaiah. —*PTI*

# Amid burial case, ED probes Dharmasthala 'foreign funding'

## CM says BJP claims it stands with Dharmadhikari but is actually against him

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

The Enforcement Directorate has initiated a preliminary investigation into the allegations of dubious foreign funding used to fuel communal conspiracies during the ongoing Dharmasthala row, officials said on Tuesday.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated a preliminary investigation under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), and further action will be taken if the probe finds proof of foreign funding rule violation and illicit use of funds, the sources said.

The sources said that the agency is gathering facts and documents related to all entities and stakeholders, including some NGOs, who are alleged to have used suspect funds to stoke controversy.

This comes after the State BJP held a massive "Dharmasthala Chalo" rally on Monday to condemn the alleged conspiracy and smear campaign against the temple town in Dakshina Kannada district.

The party has also demanded a probe by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) into the case.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah accused the BJP of playing politics over the case and asserted that the SIT was conducting an independent probe to establish facts in the matter. His government was not interfering in the investigation.

"It is not Dharma Yatre, it is a political yatre. SIT is probing the case. Don't they (BJP) have faith in our police?" he told press in Mysuru. "Dharmasthala Dharmadhikari Veerendra Heggade himself has welcomed the SIT probe."

To a question on the BJP's claims of foreign funding, Siddaramaiah said, "BJP have got funds to do all of this. From where is their money coming? Who is giving them the money?"

To a question whether the rape and murder case of Soujanya, a 17-year-old student, in Dharmasthala in 2012 will be re-investigated, Siddaramaih said it was up to the victim's mother and family to decide. The BJP has been pressing that the Soujanya case also be handed over to the CBI.

"The central agency has investigated the case. Now the BJP is saying to go to the Supreme Court," he responded. "In the Soujanya case, there are allegations against Veerendra Heggade. So, whose side is the BJP on? On one hand, they say they are on Veerendra Heggade's side, and on the other hand, they say they are on Soujanya's side. Truly, whose side are they on?"

Meanwhile, SIT Chief Pranab Mohanty met Home Minister G Parameshwara at the latter's Sadashivanagar residence.

This comes as the SIT custody of masked complainant-turned-suspect is set to end tomorrow, after 10 days of intense interrogation.

He will be produced before the Beltangady court, where the SIT is likely to seek an extension of 10–15 days to complete site inspections in Mandya and Tamil Nadu, where he is suspected to have lived and operated.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

A former sanitation worker claimed to have buried 'hundreds' of bodies in Dharmasthala over two decades. However, the SIT probing the case later arrested him **PHOTO: ANI**

- CM said that the SIT probe was impartial and accused the BJP of playing politics. He said they claimed to support the Dharmadhikari but also supported claims in the Soujanya case against the priest

### Villagers offer to show SIT burial sites

A group of local villagers has written a letter to the Special Investigation Team (SIT), stating they are prepared to show the burial sites of the alleged victims.

The letter, submitted on behalf of the villagers by Dharmasthala resident Tukaram Gowda, expresses growing concern over the seriousness of the case.

"We are living in fear," the letter states, "but we believe in the impartial and transparent investigation promised by the SIT."

The villagers claim to have identified a man seen in media reports, alleging that he was involved in transporting and burying bodies across various locations. The letter says that such incidents are an open secret. —*Salar News*

## 2 activists booked for 'provocative' videos, 'misinfo'

**MANGALURU/ BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

Two separate cases have been booked in Belthangady against activists Girish Mattannanavar and Mahesh Shetty Thimarody on charges of creating and circulating videos on social media that allegedly disturbed communal harmony and offended public sentiments, police said.

Both the complaints allege that the activists have been fuelling what both the ruling Congress and Opposition BJP/ JD(S) have called a "conspiracy" aimed at maligning the temple town.

The first complaint, filed on 30 August by Praveen KR of Dharmasthala, alleged that activist Mattannanavar, in association with Thimarody and others, had for several days brought bloggers in Belthangady and circulated what were described as false and provocative videos on social media platforms.

In a second complaint, filed on 1 September by Rajendra Das D of Dharmasthala, it was alleged that Mattannanavar had spoken in an obscene and offensive manner in a video.

Meanwhile, Minister Priyank Kharge alleged that both the activists were associated with the RSS and BJP.

"(Thimarody) is from RSS. The RSS is BJP's guru. These people grew up in RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal," he said.

Regarding Mattennavar, the Minister said, "He is Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (district) president. He was the BJP's official candidate from Gurmitkal assembly segment in Yadgir district. He was issued BJP B-Form. Today, they (Thimarody and Mattennavar) are speaking against (Dharmasthala). So whose conspiracy is this?" —*PTI*

# Ranya fined Rs 102 cr for gold smuggling

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has imposed a hefty fine of Rs 102 crore on Kannada film actress Ranya Rao in a gold smuggling case, according to DRI sources. In addition to Rao, hotelier Tarun Kondaraju was fined Rs 63 crore, while jewellers Sahil Sakaria Jain and Bharat Kumar Jain were each fined Rs 56 crore.

On Tuesday, DRI officials delivered a comprehensive 250-page notice along with a 2,500-page annexure to each individual, visiting City Central Jail for the purpose. "It was a herculean exercise to prepare a detailed notice along with supporting documents. Today we served 11,000 pages of documents to the accused," a source revealed.

Ranya Rao was apprehended with 14.8kg of gold on 3 March at Kempegowda International Airport in the City upon her arrival from Dubai. Notably, she is the step-daughter of K Ramachandra Rao, a Director General of Police rank officer. Earlier this year, she was sentenced to one year in prison under the COFEPOSA act. The case will return to court on 11 September. —*PTI*

Ranya Rao **PHOTO: PTI**

**DASARA ROW**

## Is Kumkum part of Islamic tradition? CM flays BJP, backs Banu

**MYSURU, 2 SEPT**

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday once again defended the decision to invite International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate this year's Mysuru Dasara, reiterating that the festival is celebrated by everyone, across religions, as 'Nada Habba' (State festival).

"Bhanu Mushtaq is a Muslim. Is applying kumkum/ vermillion on the forehead a tradition in Islam? If not, how can one ask her to attend a Hindu religious-cultural event like Dasara only after applying Kumkum/vermillion and turmeric/arshina?" the CM said in Mysuru.

When reporters mentioned that BJP leaders had said they wouldn't object if Bhanu Mushtaq attended the festival adorned with Kumkum// vermillion and flowers, Siddaramaiah fired back, raising concerns about religious imposition. "If people of other faiths are invited to such celebrations, can you insist they wear symbols which are specific to your religion?" he asked.

Responding to the BJP's criticism that she was anti-Kannada, he said, "She is a writer in Kannada. Without affection or love for Kannada can she write in Kannada? She has won the International Booker Prize for her work."

The remarks come amid ongoing tensions between cultural identity, religious freedom, and political posturing in State's public discourse.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

Banu Mushtaq **PHOTO: ANI**

- BJP leaders had said that they would not object to Mushtaq inaugurating this year's Dasara festivities if she applied kumkum to her forehead. The CM said that his was strongly objectionable

## Flood alert in Uttara Kannada as dam swells

**KARWAR, 2 SEPT**

With the Supa reservoir in Karwar taluk just six metres short of reaching its brim, the Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd (KPCL) has appealed to people residing in the low laying areas of the Kali river to move to safe locations. Officials said that water could be released from the dam at any moment.

As of 8.30am on Tuesday, the 147.55 tmcft capacitor reservoir held 126.345 tmcft water, with heavy rain forecast over its catchment areas. With heavy rains lashing the catchment area and an inflow of 21,261 cusecs, the water level rose to 558.87 metres, close to the maximum 564 metres.

On Monday, the reservoir had 85.63 per cent of its capacity.

KPCL, which generates hydropower from the dam, said the release of water was necessary both for safety and operational reasons.

People living in low-lying areas and riverbanks have been urged not to venture near the storage areas, as flash floods are possible.

The Supa reservoir, located in dense forestry of Uttara Kannada district, is the State's largest storage reservoir.

The Uttara Kannada district has been receiving heavy rainfall this monsoon season, with classes having to be canceled several times as precautionary measures. —*Salar News*

## BJP: New castes have been created by govt

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

A delegation of BJP leaders on Tuesday urged the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes not to conduct the Social and Educational survey, known as caste census, "hastily", and urged that it be held during summer, instead of Dasara.

The delegation also expressed its strong displeasure to a list of 1,400 castes that has been published by the Commission, saying that new castes have been created that are not in any previous government document.

"Kuruba-Christian, Madiwala-Christian, Vokkaliga-Christian -- in this way, about 107 new castes have been created. They have been given code numbers," BJP State General Secretary and **MLA V Sunil Kumar** said after meeting Commission's Chairman Madhusudan R Naik.

Warning that this creation of new castes may lead to a mass movement across the State, he said, "When it comes to Christians, we have heard about 2-3 sub-castes, and few sub-castes when it comes to Muslims."

He accused the government of trying to encourage "religious conversion" by adding the words Christian or Muslim in front of all Hindu sub-castes. —*PTI*

### Actress Pavithra denied bail in Renukaswamy murder case

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

Actress Pavithra Gowda, the primary accused in the high-profile Renukaswamy murder case, has suffered another setback as sessions court rejected her latest bail plea on Tuesday.

Following the Supreme Court's cancellation of her previous bail, Gowda's legal counsel, Advocate Balan, argued for her release, but the Sessions Court, presided over by Judge IP Naik, was not persuaded.

The court's decision came after it reserved its order post-hearing, extinguishing Gowda's hopes for an early release. Having previously secured bail, she enjoyed the right to spend time with her family, manage her business, and attend temple activities. —*PTI*

**THE JEWELLERY SHOW – MYSURU'S BIGGEST JEWELLERY EXHIBITION**

3 Days
**30+ Jewellers | 50,000+ Bridal & Festive Designs**

Venue:
**Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Mysuru**

Dates:
**4th, 5th & 6th September, 2025 (Thu–Sat)**

Timings:
**10am– 9pm**

Mysuru is set to sparkle with The Jewellery Show – an exclusive exhibition bringing together 30+ reputed and award-winning jewellers from across India under one roof. From exquisite bridal collections to budget-friendly daily wear, the show features only BIS Hallmarked Gold and GIA/IGI certified Diamonds.

Buyers can also exchange old gold for new designs, enjoy after-sales services, and learn jewellery care tips directly from experts. The event will be inaugurated by Amrutha Prem on 4 Sept at 12:30pm. **Star brands include:** Gajraj, Navrathan & Sons, Panchkesari Badera, Raj Diamonds, Prakash Jewellers, Simha Jewellers, Sristi, Roopam Silver, and many more.

**One Show for All Celebrations – Weddings, Festivals & Investments. Don't miss this once-a-year luxury showcase in Mysuru!**

**FIRST IN SOUTH INDIA**

# *Apple opens first retail store in City*

**BENGALURU, 2 SEPT**

Apple on Tuesday opened its first retail store in the City, marking its debut in south India and the company's third outlet in the country.

Named Apple Hebbal, the store will offer customers the full range of Apple products, services, and support, along with free Today at Apple sessions designed to help users get the most out of their devices, the company said in a statement.

Apple launched its first India store, Apple BKC, in Mumbai, followed by Apple Saket in Delhi, in addition to its online platform.

"We're delighted to open Apple Hebbal, a community hub that celebrates Bengaluru's spirit of innovation," said Deirdre O'Brien, Apple's senior vice president of Retail and People.

"We can't wait to connect with people here and inspire them to create, collaborate, and do amazing things with Apple. We're excited to continue bringing Apple experiences to customers across India, who inspire us with their creativity and passion," O'Brien added.

At Apple Hebbal, customers can explore the latest products, including the iPhone 16 lineup, MacBook Pro powered by the M4 family of chips, iPad Air with Apple Pencil Pro, and Apple Watch Series 10, as well as accessories such as AirPods 4 and AirTag.

The store's 70 team members come from 15 states and are trained to assist customers with personal setup, switching to iOS, monthly financing options, and the Apple Trade In program. Apple said the new store, like all its facilities worldwide, runs on 100 percent renewable energy and is carbon neutral. —*PTI*

People throng to Apple Hebbal, which opened at Phoenix Mall of Asia on Bellary Road in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD**

## 7 held for raping minor in M'luru

**MANGALURU, 2 SEPT**

Seven persons have been arrested in connection with the alleged rape of a junior college student near Kinnikambla in Gurupura Kaikamba here, police said on Tuesday.

According to police, the victim became acquainted with one of the accused through Instagram about two months ago. This developed into a relationship.

The accused have been identified as Karthik, Rakesh Saldana, Jeevan, Sandeep, Rakshith, Shravan, and Suresh.

On 29 June, Karthik allegedly lured the minor girl, took her to a hotel in Valachil for lunch, and later to a forested area near Adyar Falls. Police said he sexually assaulted her there. His associate also raped the victim. The main accused recorded the incident. Police said the other five were arrested for abetting and circulating the video. —*PTI*

## R'than brings in watered down bill on coaching hubs

**JAIPUR, 2 SEPT**

In response to widespread protests, Rajasthan government has introduced a revised version of Rajasthan Coaching Centres (Control and Regulation) Bill, 2025, easing penalties and expanding the student threshold for regulatory coverage from 50 to 100 students. The fine structure has also been relaxed, with penalties now set at Rs 50,000 for the first offence, escalating to Rs 2 lakh for subsequent breaches. Leader of Opposition Tikaram Jully condemned amendments, claiming government is prioritising the coaching mafia over student welfare amid rising suicide rates. Parents' Association has also expressed dissatisfaction, demanding parental inclusion in decision-making and a stricter, unified regulatory framework for centres. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

## Suvendu Adhikari suspended from Bengal Assembly

**KOLKATA, 2 SEPT**

Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari was suspended on Tuesday for the remainder of the special session of the West Bengal Assembly after repeatedly disrupting proceedings. The session was debating a motion condemning alleged harassment of Bengali migrants in BJP-ruled states. Adhikari clashed with Education Minister Bratya Basu, accusing him of making "defamatory" remarks about Indian Army and demanded comments be expunged. Speaker Biman Banerjee refused and ordered his suspension, drawing loud approval from TMC legislators. BJP MLAs staged a walkout. Outside the Assembly, Adhikari claimed he was "unethically forced out" and insisted Basu's remarks be removed from the official records. *—PTI*

## Search operation launched in J&K's Poonch

**MENDHAR/JAMMU, 2 SEPT**

Security forces on Tuesday launched a cordon and search operation in several villages of Poonch district in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The joint search operation by special operations group (SOG) of local police and CRPF was underway in Soyian Katha, Banjola forest, Jallian-Azamabad, Khanetar Mohalla, Kalsan and Dupriana following specific information about movement of some suspected persons, the officials said. They said SOG along with troops of Rashtriya Rifles also conducted searches at Kotli Bawin Ghali in Manjakote, Behra Kasab and Topa and Manglaanu Mankote in Mendhar on Monday but no one was arrested. On Monday, Army troops foiled an infiltration bid by engaging a group of terrorists attempting to sneak into this side in Balakot area of Mendhar. *—PTI*

## Bank fraud case: ED conducts raids in 3 states

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has launched raids across Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Goa as part of an investigation into a bank loan fraud worth Rs 637 crore involving Chennai-based Arvind Remedies and its promoter, Arvind B Shah. The raids target locations in Chennai, Kanchipuram, Kolkata, and Goa, following allegations of cheating a consortium of lenders led by Punjab National Bank (PNB). The investigation, rooted in a July 2021 case, uncovered a complex money trail, revealing that funds were allegedly siphoned through "shell" entities controlled by the promoters. The ED's inquiry includes an analysis of the company's financial reports and numerous bank accounts related to the fraud. *—PTI*

# M'rashtra to allow Marathas to seek Kunbi status

### Jarange warns BJP govt against going back on its promises

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

Activist Manoj Jarange issued a stern warning to the BJP-led government against going back on its promises on the Maratha quota.

The protest, held at Azad Maidan in Mumbai, had caused major disruption, with the Bombay High Court earlier in the day ordering the site to be cleared by 3pm, noting the stir had "literally paralysed" the city.

A tense standoff briefly unfolded between police and protesters.

Jarange broke his fast after senior BJP minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil assured him of the government's commitment. Still emotional, Jarange cautioned, "If there is any attempt to deceive us on the implementation of Government Resolution (GR) and other promises, I will sit at Vikhe's home till death." The GR, issued Tuesday, outlines a process to issue Kunbi caste certificates to eligible Marathas based on the 1918 Hyderabad gazette, which classified some Marathas as Kunbis. The Kunbi tag qualifies for OBC reservation in Maharashtra.

Maratha community members celebrate after government accepted most of activist Manoj Jarange Patil's demands in Mumbai PHOTO: PTI

Village-level scrutiny committees — comprising a gram sevak, talathi, and assistant agriculture officer — will verify documents like old land records predating November 21, 1961.

Claims will be processed transparently and time-bound.

Additional GRs issued by the General Administration Department announced five key measures:

1. Financial aid and jobs for kin of those who died during the quota stir.
2. Withdrawal of all protest-related police cases by September 2025.
3. Waiver of exam fees for Maratha students this academic year.
4. Quicker caste verification by the Justice Sandeep Shinde Committee — within 10 days of filing.
5. Fresh scrutiny of pending and new applications by the same committee.

Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis called Jarange's decision "wise" and said government's solution balances justice for Marathas with legal and administrative frameworks. *—PTI*

> Lakhs from the OBC community will take to the streets if their share of reservation is reduced. OBCs are already struggling to secure limited opportunities, and further dilution would cause severe injustice
>
>
>
> -Chhagan Bhujbal, Maharashtra Minister

**'EC ATTACKING ME'**

# EC issues notice to Khera for having 2 voter IDs

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Poll authorities in Delhi have issued a notice to Congress leader **Pawan Khera** for allegedly getting himself registered in the electoral roll of more than one constituency.

The district election officer of New Delhi district shared a copy of the notice issued to Khera on X. The Congress leader has been directed to reply to the notice by 11am on 8 September.

"It has been brought to my notice that you have got your name registered in the electoral roll of more than one constituency," read the notice.

According to the notice, Khera is enrolled as a voter in New Delhi and Jangpura assembly constituencies.

"As you may be aware, that being registered in the electoral roll of more than one constituency is a penal offence under the Representation of People Act, 1950. You are therefore, directed to show cause as to why action should not be taken against you under said Act," read the notice.

Reacting to the development, Khera said in a post on X, "... Yet another confirmation of how the @ECISVEEP functions to support the ruling regime. While our complaints of Vote Chori are disregarded, the EC rushes to act against opposition members."

He questioned why the Election Commission did not issue a single notice to "the 1,00,000 fake voters of Mahadevapura constituency, that were exposed by @RahulGandhi?"

Meanwhile, Khera hit back at the BJP after it alleged that he had two voter IDs, saying in a bid to target him and his party, it has ended up targeting the EC and left it "bleeding".

Khera claimed that with his "morning stunt", BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya has "conceded" that the EC has "failed to maintain the integrity" of the electoral rolls. *—PTI*

# 'Bihar won't forgive Cong for insulting my mom'

**PATNA, 2 SEPT**

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on Tuesday expressed "deep pain" over alleged abuses directed at his late mother during the Voter Adhikar Yatra in Bihar, warning that while he might forgive the RJD and Congress, "the people of Bihar will never pardon them".

PHOTO: PTI

Speaking at an event in Delhi while virtually launching the Bihar Rajya Jeevika Nidhi Sahkari Sangh Limited, a cooperative initiative supporting women's self-help groups, Modi accused the opposition of "insulting mothers and sisters" and displaying a "misogynistic mindset".

"My late mother had nothing to do with politics. Why was she abused?" he said, his voice breaking with emotion. "I may forgive them, but the people will not tolerate such insults. Every son and daughter of Bihar must hold them accountable."

Modi alleged that during the RJD's rule, "mothers and sisters lived in fear" and that women voter played a decisive role in ending its "lawless regime". He claimed the opposition was now "taking revenge" on the women of Bihar and called upon them to "come out on the streets and demand an apology".

The controversy stems from an incident in Darbhanga where a 25-year-old man allegedly hurled an expletive at a Congress-led rally. He has been arrested, but the BJP continues to demand apologies from Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, who deny involvement. Bihar BJP president Dilip Jaiswal was seen in tears as Modi spoke, calling the episode "an insult Bihar will not forgive". *—PTI*

# India-US to have trade pact by Nov: Goyal

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Commerce and Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal** on Tuesday expressed hope that India will conclude the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA) with the US by the fall or November this year.

He said that "a little bit" of geopolitical issues overtook the trade matters in the negotiations for the pact between the two countries.

In his virtual address, he said there is an excitement across the world to expand trading and business relations with India.

India has already inked free trade agreements with Australia, the UAE, Mauritius, the UK and the four European nations bloc EFTA, he said.

PHOTO: PTI

Additionally, Goyal said India-China relations are gradually moving towards normalcy, noting that as border issues get resolved, easing of tensions is a natural consequence.

At the meeting held on the margins of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, Modi and Xi agreed to work towards a "fair, reasonable and mutually-acceptable" solution to the India-China border issue, and pledged to expand trade and investment ties, recognising the role of the two economies to stabilise global trade.

> It's troublesome. It was a shame to see Modi getting in bed as the leader of biggest democracy in the world, Putin and Xi Jinping
>
>
>
> Peter Navarro, US Trade Adviser

> Because of Pakistan's willingness to do business deals with Trump family, Trump has thrown India relationship over the side
>
>
>
> -Jake Sullivan, US Ex-NSA

In a related development, India sought consultations with the US under the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) safeguard agreement over 50 per cent tariffs imposed on certain copper products by America. *—PTI*

# AAP MLA held for rape flees after aides open fire on cops

**PATIALA, 2 SEPT**

AAP MLA Harmeet Singh Pathanmajra escaped police custody on Tuesday after his arrest in a rape case, as supporters allegedly fired shots and pelted stones at police in Dabri village, Haryana's Karnal district.

Punjab's Patiala police said they had arrested the Sanour MLA during a raid, but chaos broke out, enabling him to flee. One associate, Balwinder Singh, was caught with three weapons, and a Toyota Fortuner was seized.

Pathanmajra faces charges of rape, cheating and criminal intimidation after a Zirakpur-based woman alleged he falsely claimed to be divorced, entered a relationship with her, and married in 2021 while still married. She accused him of sexual exploitation, threats, and sending obscene material.

After the FIR, Pathanmajra went live on Facebook, accusing AAP's Delhi leadership of "illegitimately ruling Punjab" and trying to silence him. The arrest comes a day after he criticised the government for failing to desilt the Tangri River, blaming senior IAS officer Krishan Kumar for worsening floods. AAP leader Baltej Singh Pannu claimed Pathanmajra raised the flood issue only after learning police could act on the complaint. *—PTI*

# India-Singapore to sign 5 deals during Wong's visit

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

India and Singapore are set to enhance their partnership with five agreements focused on shipping, civil aviation, and space during Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong's three-day visit to New Delhi starting Tuesday. Sources indicate that Wong's inaugural visit aims to deepen economic engagement between the two nations, leveraging their foundational complementarities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Wong will virtually inaugurate a container terminal in Maharashtra on Thursday, with the Port of Singapore Authority (PSA International) investing over USD 1 billion into the project.

"Singapore is an important partner for India, including in our 'Act East' Policy," noted the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Wong's visit, marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, "reaffirms" both countries' commitment to strengthening their comprehensive strategic partnership, providing a platform for the leaders to review ongoing cooperation and outline future collaboration.

Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong being welcomed upon his arrival in New Delhi during his first official visit to India PHOTO: PTI

Additionally, discussions will cover regional and international issues of mutual interest. Wong, accompanied by a high-level delegation, will also meet with President Droupadi Murmu. Prior to Wong's arrival, an India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable took place in New Delhi, facilitating preparations for the trip. *—PTI*

## Too little, too late: Cong flays Modi's Manipur visit

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi likely to visit Manipur on 13 September, the Congress on Tuesday said that though he finally may have summoned up the courage and empathy to visit the northeast state briefly, it may be "too little too late".

Congress General Secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh, said PM travelled all over the world and visited Assam and Arunachal Pradesh over the past two-and-a-half years. But he has found neither the time nor the inclination to reach out to the people of Manipur, he said. The state witnessed violence after Kuki-Zo tribes living in the hill districts protested against a high court recommendation for granting Scheduled Tribe status to the Meiteis.

In a post on X, Ramesh said, "The complete neglect of Manipur by the prime minister, combined with the loud-mouthed incompetence of the Union home minister, has deepened the pain, distress, and agony of all communities of Manipur's society." *—PTI*

**DETENTION CAMPS SET UP**

# *Govt to deport foreigners over anti-nat'l acts*

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Foreigners may be refused entry into or stay in India if they are convicted on charges of anti-national activities, espionage, rape and murder, terrorist acts, child trafficking or being a member of a banned organisation, according to an official order.

Under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, introduced recently, every state government and Union territory administration will set up dedicated holding centres or detention camps for the purpose of restricting the movement of foreigners till they are deported, the order issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs said.

The Home Ministry said every foreigner applying for any category of visa, including registration as an Overseas Citizen of India cardholder, shall allow his or her biometric information to be taken by the authority issuing the visa or the authority granting the registration as OCI cardholder before the grant of such visa or registration as OCI cardholder.

Every foreigner shall be required to obtain a permit to enter into or stay in any protected or restricted area PHOTO: PTI

It also said that in case of illegal immigrants apprehended within India, they shall be imposed with restrictions on movement in a holding centre or camp pending deportation.

The designated border guarding forces or the Coast Guard shall take steps to prevent illegal immigrants attempting to enter India by sending them back after capturing their biometric information and available demographic details on the designated portal of the central government. Besides, every foreigner shall be required to obtain a permit to enter into or stay in any protected or restricted area.

The Bureau of Immigration will maintain an updated list of foreigners whose entry into India will be prohibited and who shall not be granted permission to depart from India. *—PTI*

## NAGALAND ASSEMBLY POSTPONES DEBATE ON 'SATANIC WORSHIP'

**KOHIMA, 2 SEPT**

The Nagaland Assembly on Tuesday deferred a proposed discussion on "Satanic Worship," which was scheduled for the opening day of the monsoon session.

Naga People's Front Legislature Party leader and former Home Minister, MLA Kuzholuzo (Azo) Nienu, had sought to draw the House's attention under Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, proposing a debate on the "Prohibition of Satanic Worship in Nagaland."

Assembly Secretariat had earlier admitted the matter as one of "urgent public importance" and listed it for discussion. However, Speaker Sharingain Longkumer announced it being "deferred until further listing."

Speaking to reporters, Azo said the decision followed requests from Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio and the Speaker, who wanted the Assembly to study the matter thoroughly before tabling it. He stressed that the issue was serious and called for legislation to ban such practices.

Meanwhile, the Nagaland Joint Christian Forum (NJCF) expressed "grave concern" over the government's move, warning that an Assembly discussion could inadvertently legitimise or promote a practice it described as "universally rejected" and "alien" to Naga society. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

## SC bins plea against bail to Kanhaiya Lal murder accused

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed pleas by the NIA and Kanhaiya Lal's son challenging bail granted to accused Mohammed Javed in the 2022 Udaipur tailor beheading case. A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and Satish Chandra Sharma upheld the Rajasthan High Court's decision, refusing to cancel Javed's bail. The NIA and Lal's son argued Javed played a key role by informing the killers of Lal's whereabouts. They alleged the murder was premeditated, with weapons gathered, recce done, and Javed planted to track Lal. Lal was hacked to death on 28 June, 2022, by Mohammad Riyaz and Mohammad Gause, who filmed and shared the act online after he allegedly supported a controversial social media post. *—PTI*

## Migrant workers' protest turns violent in Chennai

**CHENNAI, 2 SEPT**

A protest by migrant workers demanding justice for a colleague who died in an accidental fall turned violent in Kattupalli, Chennai's northern suburb, on Tuesday. The workers, protesting the death of Amaresh Prasad, 32, from Uttar Pradesh, who fell from an under-construction building on 1 September, began pelting stones at police officers who had arrived to address their grievances. Initially outnumbered, police later deployed additional forces and used mild force to disperse the mob. Officers later stormed a dormitory and detained workers, including those protesting from the rooftop. Over 55 workers are currently being interrogated in connection with the violence. The protest was sparked by demands for compensation to Prasad's family. *—PTI*

## Engg student found dead in Odisha

**SAMBALPUR, 2 SEPT**

The body of Anjaneya Dash, a final-year mechanical engineering student of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), was found under mysterious circumstances beneath PC bridge in Burla on Tuesday. A native of Jajpur, Dash was residing at the university's Pulastya hostel. Police said he was found with multiple injuries and rushed to VIMSAR, where he was declared dead on arrival. His family, alleging murder, is en route to Sambalpur. Burla Police have registered a case and launched an investigation, probing both accident and foul play. Inspector SK Baliarsingh said the death appears accidental, but the exact cause will be confirmed after the post-mortem. *—PTI*

## Rly staff with SBI accounts to get ₹1 cr accident cover

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Indian Railways has signed an MoU with State Bank of India (SBI) to offer Rs 1 crore accidental death insurance to employees holding salary accounts with SBI. This marks a massive upgrade from the current CGEGIS coverage of Rs 1.20 lakh (Group A), Rs 60,000 (Group B), and Rs 30,000 (Group C). Additionally, employees will receive Rs 10 lakh natural death cover, without premiums or medical tests. Around 7 lakh railway staff stand to benefit. Other key covers include Rs 1.6 crore air accident insurance, Rs 1 crore for permanent total disability, and up to Rs 80 lakh for partial disability. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw called it a significant move for staff welfare, especially for frontline workers. *—PTI*

# Decision not based on parties in power: SC

## On state vs guv, SC says it will answer constitutional questions even if row is political

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Chief Justice of India, BR Gavai, on Tuesday reiterated that the judiciary's decisions are not influenced by political considerations but grounded solely in constitutional principles. This remark came during the hearing of the Presidential reference concerning whether courts can impose timelines on Governors and the President for acting on bills passed by state assemblies.

The hearing saw a sharp exchange between Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, and Senior Advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Tamil Nadu. The bench, including Justices Surya Kant, Vikram Nath, P.S. Narasimha, and A.S. Chandurkar, emphasised the importance of judicial review as part of the Constitution's basic structure and stressed that courts cannot shy away from constitutional questions even if politically sensitive.

The bench questioned if a general timeline could be imposed under Article 142, which empowers the court to issue any order necessary to deliver complete justice, even overriding existing laws.

Mehta objected to Singhvi's citing of state-specific cases like Andhra Pradesh, warning that pursuing such examples risked derailing the constitutional debate. The CJI redirected the focus strictly to constitutional provisions.

Singhvi explained the concept of a bill "falling through" when a Governor returns it to the assembly for reconsideration under Article 200, but the assembly refuses to resend it. He warned that Governors withholding assent indefinitely could effectively exercise a "pocket veto," stalling legislation.

He argued that ad hoc judicial interventions were insufficient and that Articles 200 and 201 required a clear constitutional timeline to prevent systemic delays, which sometimes span three to five years.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for West Bengal, echoed concerns that withholding assent frustrates the people's will.

He insisted neither Governors nor the President have independent legislative powers and that treating withholding assent as discretionary leads to a constitutional breakdown.

According to Sibal, the Governor's role under Article 200 is a constitutional duty, not a free choice, and any discretion must be exercised within constitutional limits. *—PTI*

### Cartoons on PM: SC gives bail to Malviya

The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted anticipatory bail to cartoonist Hemant Malviya, accused of sharing allegedly objectionable cartoons of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and RSS workers on social media. The bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and N V Anjaria noted Malviya's apology on Facebook and Instagram, allowing police to seek bail cancellation if he does not cooperate. Malviya faces charges under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and IT Act for allegedly hurting Hindu religious sentiments and disturbing communal harmony. The court made the protection from coercive action absolute.

### 'Remission constitutional, statutory right'

The Supreme Court ruled that convicts sentenced to life imprisonment under Sections 376DA and 376DB of the IPC for gangrape of minors have a constitutional and statutory right to seek remission. A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and R Mahadevan clarified that while life imprisonment is mandatory, convicts can apply for remission under Articles 72 and 161 of the Constitution, as well as state remission policies. The court left open the question of whether Section 376DA's sentencing mandate allows no mitigating circumstances for future cases.

# Kerala Guv moves SC against CM over VC selection

Pinarayi Vijayan and Rajendra Arlekar — PHOTO: PTI

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Kerala Governor Rajendra Arlekar has approached the Supreme Court seeking to exclude Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan from the selection process of Vice Chancellors (VCs) for APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University and Kerala Digital University.

As Chancellor of both universities, the Governor argued that the Acts governing these institutions do not envision any role for the Chief Minister in the VC selection process. Citing the "State of West Bengal v. Dr Sanat Kumar Ghosh" case, the Governor said that unlike West Bengal's university law, Kerala's university Acts lack any provision for the involvement of the higher education minister or state government.

The plea requested modification of the Supreme Court's August 18 order, which included the Chief Minister in the selection process, contending that such involvement violates the principle against "a person judging his own cause," as embedded in University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations. It also opposed participation of state government nominees in the search-cum-selection committee chaired by former Supreme Court judge Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia.

The Governor sought that the panel of selected candidates be submitted alphabetically to the Chancellor, who alone should have the prerogative to appoint the VC. The plea further recommended including a UGC chairman nominee in the selection committee.

This follows the Kerala High Court dismissing appeals challenging a May 19 ruling that declared temporary VC appointments at both universities unsustainable due to improper procedure. The controversy arose after the Governor appointed temporary VCs in November 2024, which the state government challenged for not complying with Acts and UGC rules. *—PTI*

**DELHI RIOTS**

# 5 yrs on, HC denies bail to Sharjeel & Umar again

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday rejected bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, and seven others in the 2020 Delhi riots conspiracy case registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

A bench of Justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur dismissed the appeals filed by Khalid, Imam, Mohd Saleem Khan, Shifa-ur-Rehman, Athar Khan, Meeran Haider, Abdul Khalid Saifi, Gulfisha Fatima, and Shadab Ahmed, who have been in custody since 2020. The accused had challenged a trial court's decision denying them bail. The prosecution strongly opposed the appeals, arguing the riots were not spontaneous but a "well-planned conspiracy" with a "sinister motive" to defame India globally.

Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam — PHOTO: PTI

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that long incarceration alone was no ground for bail in a case involving national security. "If you do anything against your nation, you better be in jail till you are acquitted," he said.

Imam's counsel contended that he was not connected to the location, timing, or other co-accused, and that his speeches and chats did not incite violence.

The February 2020 riots, which occurred during protests against the CAA and National Register of Citizens (NRC), left 53 dead and over 700 injured. Khalid, Imam and others are accused of being the "masterminds". *—PTI*

## Govt to use thermal census for Andaman tribes

**PORT BLAIR, 2 SEPT**

As preparations begin for Census 2027, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is considering a 'non-invasive thermal census' to count the Sentinelese tribe of North Sentinel Island, officials said.

The Sentinelese, one of the world's last pre-Neolithic tribes, are known for their complete isolation and hostility to outsiders. The tribe is protected under the Protection of Aboriginal Tribe (Regulation), 1956, and the Indian Forest Act, 1927. Entry into their 14,700-acre island is strictly prohibited.

"They may have lived in the Andamans for over 55,000 years and are directly descended from early African humans," a tribal welfare officer said. Any contact attempts are met with armed resistance. In 2018, American tourist John Allen Chau was killed after illegally entering their territory.

The thermal census proposal is being evaluated, with final SOPs yet to be decided.

Meanwhile, the first meeting of the UT-level Census Coordination Committee was held on 29 August, chaired by Chief Secretary Chandra Bhushan Kumar. Officials confirmed the 2027 census will be digital, conducted in two phases, with pre-testing in October–November 2025. *—PTI*

# HC grants relief to KCR till 7 Oct

**HYDERABAD, 2 SEPT**

The Telangana High Court on Tuesday directed the state government not to take any adverse action against former Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) and former minister T Harish Rao based on the Ghose Commission report, until 7 October.

The judicial commission, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice P C Ghose, submitted its report on 31 July, holding KCR accountable for alleged irregularities in the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project. Harish Rao, irrigation minister during the BRS regime, was also named in the findings. Challenging the report, both leaders filed writ petitions and interim pleas seeking to quash the findings and restrain the government from initiating action, especially after the state announced a CBI probe into the matter. After hearing the pleas, the High Court directed that "no adverse action based upon the findings of the report be taken against the petitioners till the next date — 7 October."

Advocate General BS Prasad informed the court that no action taken report had yet been placed before the Assembly, but confirmed that one would eventually be tabled, as required. He added that the government had referred the matter to the CBI based on the Ghose Commission report, inputs from the National Dam Safety Authority. *—PTI*

# NORTH INDIA REELS UNDER HEAVY RAINS

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Heavy rainfall has triggered widespread disruption across North India, with flooding in Delhi, pilgrimage suspension in Jammu and Kashmir, and travel shutdowns in Himachal Pradesh and parts of Punjab and Haryana.

In Delhi, the Yamuna crossed the danger mark of 205.33 metres, reaching 205.80 metres at the Old Yamuna Bridge on Tuesday. Water entered homes in low-lying areas like Mayur Vihar. Evacuation efforts began as the river received heavy discharge from Hathnikund, Wazirabad, and Okhla barrages.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the Vaishno Devi pilgrimage remained suspended for the eighth consecutive day following incessant rainfall and landslides. Officials have vacated 80 vulnerable structures in Katra, including 15 hotels. A landslide on 26 August killed 34 pilgrims. All bookings, including helicopter services, have been refunded.

Himachal Pradesh faced widespread disruption with 1,311 roads, including six national highways, closed due to landslides. Schools were shut across multiple districts. Trains on the Shimla-Kalka route were suspended. At least 327 people have died in rain-related incidents since June.

In Punjab and Haryana, swollen rivers have inundated vast areas. Fresh rain lashed parts of both states, with Gurugram receiving 81 mm and Patiala 70.5 mm. Schools and colleges have been closed in flood-affected districts. *—PTI*

A woman fills water from a handpump at a flooded area after Yamuna river crossed the danger mark in New Delhi on Tuesday — PHOTO: PTI

## Woman finds missing husband on reels after 8 yrs

**HARDOI, 2 SEPT**

A woman in Uttar Pradesh's Hardoi district found her missing husband after eight years, thanks to an Instagram reel, leading to his arrest for bigamy and abandonment, police said on Tuesday.

Jitendra Kumar alias Bablu, who went missing in 2018, was recognised by his wife Sheelu in a video posted from Ludhiana, Punjab. He had allegedly remarried and was living under a new identity.

Married in 2017, Sheelu was allegedly harassed for dowry and thrown out of her marital home. A dowry complaint was filed, and amid the investigation, Jitendra vanished. His father filed a missing person report in April 2018 and accused Sheelu's family of foul play.

For years, Sheelu had no clue of his whereabouts. But in a recent reel, she spotted him with another woman and alerted police. A team led by Sub-Inspector Rajanikant Pandey arrested him from Ludhiana. *—PTI*

**'SAFEGUARDS NEEDED'**

# *HC 'concerned' over men training women in gyms*

**PRAYAGRAJ, 2 SEPT**

The Allahabad High Court has raised serious concerns about the safety and dignity of women being trained by male gym instructors without proper safeguards in place.

Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav made the observations while hearing an appeal by Nitin Saini, a gym trainer from Meerut, accused of using caste-based slurs against a female client. The complainant told the trial court that the accused not only insulted her but also recorded obscene videos of another woman gym-goer and sent those videos to her. Taking note of these allegations, the bench said offences under Sections 354 (assault or use of criminal force to outrage the modesty of a woman) and 504 (intentional insult to provoke breach of peace) of the Indian Penal Code may also apply.

The complainant told the court that the accused recorded obscene videos of another woman gym-goer and sent those videos to her — PHOTO: FREEPIK

The court noted, "It is a matter of serious concern that presently male gym trainers are imparting training to female clients without adequate safeguards to ensure their safety and dignity."

The next hearing is scheduled for September 8.

The court directed the Investigating Officer of Brahmpuri Police Station, Meerut, to file a personal affidavit clarifying whether the gym in question was legally registered, whether the accused had been arrested, and whether female trainers were employed at the gym.

The High Court's strong warning highlights the urgent need for stricter regulatory oversight and gender-sensitive policies in gyms to protect women's safety and dignity during training sessions. *—PTI*

## RATS GNAW AT 2 NEWBORNS IN MP

**INDORE, 2 SEPT**

Two newborns were bitten by rats at Maharaja Yashwantrao Hospital (MYH) in Indore within 48 hours, prompting an official probe. The infants, one abandoned and another with congenital deformities, suffered injuries to the fingers, head, and shoulder, said hospital superintendent Dr Ashok Yadav.

A committee has been formed to investigate the incidents. Hospital staff have been instructed to maintain 24-hour vigilance, and iron nets are being installed on windows. Attendants are also barred from bringing outside food into wards. The Congress has slammed the BJP-led state government, calling the incident a gross administrative failure. Party spokesperson Neelabh Shukla said this has sparked fear among the public. *—PTI*

**HISTORIC DISASTER**

Homes partially submerged at a flood hit area in Tiba Gheal village of Pakistan, on Tuesday. The floods have killed at least 850 people in Pakistan this monsoon and displaced millions *PHOTO: PTI*

# A breakdown of Modi and Trump's public 'breakup'

Just months into US President Donald Trump's second term in office, one of America's most important strategic partnerships is in crisis.

Relations between the US and India are at their lowest ebb in a quarter of a century. Things are so bad that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reportedly refused to accept calls from Trump for more than two months.

In recent days, Trump labelled trade ties with India a "totally one-sided disaster" and reports speculate that he is no longer planning to visit India later this year for a summit of the Quad partners (India, the US, Australia and Japan).

US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi *PHOTO: PTI*

Things were not meant to happen this way. Many in New Delhi were delighted when Trump won the election last year. Modi congratulated his "friend" on X, along with pictures of the two embracing and holding hands.

Indian Foreign Minister, S Jaishankar, told press that while other countries might be "nervous" about Trump's return, India was not.

Feeling confident, Modi went to Washington to meet Trump days after his return to office. The encounter did not go well.

On the eve of the meeting, Modi was embarrassed by distressing images of Indian nationals, handcuffed and shackled, being deported from the US on a military aircraft.

But, in the Oval Office, he promised to buy more US arms, oil and gas, and asked that Trump not impose punitive tariffs on India. Modi failed to get that commitment.

A few weeks later, Trump announced India would be hit with a 27 per cent tariff – far higher than the 10 per cent imposed on China – unless it could negotiate something better. Begrudgingly, New Delhi began to talk trade. US Vice President JD Vance visited India in late April and both sides made positive noises about a deal. But while Vance was in town, India was engulfed in a new crisis.

On 22 April, terrorists killed 26 people – mostly Hindu tourists – in Kashmir, long the site of simmering conflict between India and Pakistan. The Modi government pledged to respond with force.

On 7 May, India bombed what it claimed were militant camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir. A rapidly escalating, unpredictable conflict followed, as both sides used drones and missiles to attack one another.

Alarmed, governments around the world urged the two nuclear-armed states to end hostilities before matters got out of control. On 10 May Trump stepped in and announced on social media that both sides had agreed to a deal. The next day he claimed they would soon sit down with him as mediator and find a solution to the Kashmir conflict. Islamabad was jubilant at this outcome. New Delhi was furious.

India's longstanding view is that the Kashmir dispute must be settled bilaterally, without third-party involvement. The US has accepted this position for more than 20 years. Now it appeared Trump was taking a different view.

This put Modi in a bind. Keen to maintain a mutually beneficial partnership and avoid punitive tariffs, he did not wish to upset Trump.

But he could not acknowledge Trump's claims without setting aside a fundamental principle of Indian policy. So, Modi called Washington and explained he would not accept mediation over Kashmir.

Meanwhile, Pakistan saw an opportunity to win favour in Washington and drive a wedge between the US and India. Recognising that Trump covets a Nobel Peace Prize, Islamabad nominated him for his supposed role in ending the conflict.

Enthused, Trump called Modi on 17 June and asked him to do the same. Worse still, Trump requested Modi stop in Washington on the way back from the G7 summit in Canada, and meet with Pakistan's military chief, Asim Munir.

According to a recent report, that was the final straw for Modi. He flatly refused both requests. The two reportedly haven't spoken since.

Piqued, Trump responded by punishing India for continuing to buy Russian oil by lifting its tariff rate to 50 per cent and postponing trade talks.

**WHAT'S NEXT?**

Trump's actions have ordinary Indians seething and demanding action, but the Modi government does not have good options.

Giving in to coercion would make Modi – dubbed by political opponents "Narender Surrender" – look weak. Yet, no other major power can offer India what it needs in terms of markets, investment, technology, weapons and diplomatic support.

With US-India relations strained, New Delhi has been working hard to stabilise its relationship with China, which has been tense since bloody border clashes between the two in 2020.

Modi went to China for the first time in seven years on 31 August to further that aim, shaking hands with President Xi Jinping. But although Xi emphasised the need for amicable ties – he said the "elephant and dragon should dance together" – there is little trust between India and China at present. Modi has more faith in Russia. In China, Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin reportedly spoke for nearly an hour in Putin's limousine. And Modi will host the Russian leader for more talks in India later this year. However, Russia remains a pariah in Europe, with limited means to help.

Other countries, like Japan, where Modi stopped off on his way to China, could also help India navigate the current crisis. But they do not have the clout to resolve it.

Unless Modi can find a way to win Trump back, India's next few years could be very difficult. —The Conversation

SALAR ساڈہ

# Why was the Afghanistan earthquake so deadly?

The death toll following the recent earthquake in Afghanistan continues to rise. Taliban-led health authorities now say at least 1,400 people have been killed and 2,000 injured.

The earthquake struck just before midnight local time on Sunday in a mountainous region near the city of Jalalabad, along the eastern border with Pakistan. It was of a relatively low 6.0 magnitude. But its epicentre was shallow at 8km underground, resulting in strong shaking on the surface and a series of aftershocks.

Most of the dead and injured were sleeping indoors at the time of the earthquake, and were crushed by collapsing buildings. Because of the remoteness of the affected areas, and also blockage of road networks from landslides caused by the earthquake, the exact death toll may take a long time to find out.

**REGION PRONE TO EARTHQUAKES**

The Himalaya and Hindu Kush mountains, and their foothills, where the impacted area in Afghanistan is located, are seismically active because of the ongoing friction between the Eurasian and Indian tectonic plates. This has led to some of the most devastating earthquakes in the region such as the 2015 Gorkha earthquake in Nepal. Afghanistan also has its fair share of earthquakes, especially in the currently impacted region. In October 2023 an earthquake here killed more than 1,500 people. The previous year, more than 1,000 people were killed by another earthquake.

The 2011 earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, was of a similar magnitude and occurred at a shallower depth as the most recent one in Afghanistan. Yet, even though it impacted a built-up city, only 185 people died.

The hundreds of deaths in scattered rural hamlets in Afghanistan present a sharp contrast.

**EARTHQUAKES DON'T KILL – BUILDINGS DO**

An oft-quoted phrase, "earthquakes don't kill people, buildings do", is helpful to understand the factors that contribute to the high death toll of this earthquake and past ones in Afghanistan.

Rural communities in Afghanistan can't afford sturdy and manufactured building materials. Because of this they build homes with locally available natural materials such as earth, stone and raw lumber.

Such buildings do not follow engineered designs, building codes or formal professional standards that prevent easy damage by earthquakes in wealthier countries.

A typical form of construction in Afghan rural areas is walls made of mud bricks or stone masonry. This is known as "monolithic" construction. Such construction is unable to resist the strong side-to-side shaking caused by an earthquake. As a result, buildings easily tumble and crush people. Reports of collapsed rubble where there were once buildings are emerging widely from Afghanistan, as was also the case in previous earthquakes.

**DESIGN CHANGES**

Examples from other countries in the region demonstrate a better level of earthquake-resilient building design can be achieved in similar socio-economic conditions.

In Nepal, after the 2015 Gorkha earthquakes the government established the minimum standards of their National Building Code, that allow rules of thumb to comply with a basic level of earthquake resilience.

More than 25 years ago, Indian earthquake engineer Anand Arya pioneered his approach to reducing earthquake risk for "non-engineered" buildings. Among other techniques, this approach includes adding continuous bands in the walls, and reinforcements in the corners of a building and along doors and windows, which can provide strength to traditional masonry buildings.

These examples demonstrate that not a lot of money is always required to improve earthquake resilience. Rather, a degree of technical and institutional support can achieve safety in cost-effective ways.

Admittedly, such buildings would not be entirely earthquake-proof. But they would still impart a level of strength that can lead to less damage, and importantly, save lives.

One can hope this will be a trigger for such an initiative in Afghanistan, so a "building back better" process can assist the impacted communities to be more resilient. —*PTI*

Most of the dead and injured were sleeping indoors at the time of the earthquake *PHOTO: PTI*

**LETTERS** write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

# *80 years on, a dangerous legacy of WWII lingers in the Pacific*

On 2 September, 1945, the Second World War ended when Japan officially surrendered. Today, on the 80th anniversary, the physical legacy of the conflict remains etched into land and sea.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Pacific. There, fierce battles left behind sunken warships, aircraft and unexploded bombs. These remnants are not only historical artefacts but toxic time capsules.

They leak fuel, heavy metals and other hazardous substances into fragile ecosystems, threatening biodiversity and, potentially, human health.

This problem is a reminder of the enduring environmental harms of conflict. Toxic remnants of war can damage ecosystems and communities long after the fighting stops.

World War II in the Pacific involved four years of conflict between Japan and Allied forces. The war began in the region in December 1941 when Japan attacked a United States naval base at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii.

The Pacific conflict included the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Battle of Midway and the Guadalcanal campaign in the Solomon Islands.

Pacific islands became staging grounds for battles. Weapons were stockpiled and hazardous material discarded. Ships and aircraft were sunk.

When the war ended, much of this material was simply left behind.

Among the remains are an estimated 3,800 wrecks still lying on the Pacific Ocean floor.

As remnants of war degrade, they often leach toxic pollutants into nearby waters and soils. These can build up in marine life, enter the food chain and pose serious risks to both biodiversity.

At Palau, a WWII Japanese ship sank in Koror Harbour and became known as the Helmet Wreck. It contains Japanese depth charges leaking acid into surrounding waters.

Researchers have shown the long-term environmental impacts in the Baltic Sea of unexploded WWII ordnance – bombs, shells and grenades that failed to detonate. An estimated 3000kg of dissolved ammunition chemicals have been found.

Coral reefs and mangroves, which are vital for coastal protection, are especially vulnerable to both chemical exposure and physical damage.

For example, researchers examined the effects off Puerto Rico of unexploded ordnance. They found nearby sea animals contained potentially toxic compounds leaking from the ordnance, which meant the substances had entered the food web.

The mushroom cloud over Nagasaki after US dropped atom bombs on Japanese cities during World War II *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

Unexploded ordnance continues to endanger communities. Just last year, for example, more than 200 bombs were found buried beneath a school in the Solomon Islands.

In places such as Palau, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, these dangers are unearthed regularly. They can be found by farmers working their land, children playing or fisherman working.

Buried bombs, sunken ships and downed aircraft often contain fuel and heavy metals. This includes lead and cadmium which can interfere with the body's hormone system and cause serious health issues.

Research into the human health impacts of war remains is limited – especially in the Pacific. But existing studies suggest exposure is linked to serious consequences.

For example, parental exposure to wartime contaminants has been linked to birth defects in Gaza and Vietnam.

And a study of Britsh Army ammunition technicians released earlier this year found significantly higher rates of bladder cancer than the general population. This suggests occupational exposure to explosive compounds may pose long-term health risks.

As Earth's climate warms, extreme weather events are worsening and seas are rising. This is exacerbating the dangers posed by wartime remnants.

For example Cyclone Pam, in March 2015, exposed unexploded WWII ordnance in Kiribati and Tuvalu. Further investigations revealed remnants including high explosive projectiles, mortars and 5,300 rounds of ammunition.

In 2020, a visiting fisherman found an unexploded bomb near Lord Howe Island. Then-Environment Minister Sussan Ley suggested the device may have been shifted by a cyclone or ocean currents.

Similarly, floods and landslides can move these hazards over significant distances, increasing uncertainty around their locations and complicating clearance efforts.

Rising sea levels are threatening to breach one of the Pacific's most toxic legacies – the Runit Dome in the Marshall Islands. This concrete structure was built in the late 1970s to contain radioactive waste from US nuclear testing decades earlier.

Research shows extreme storms could increase radioactive sediments in the area to up to 84 times higher than normal. There are also concerns cracks in the dome's surface could lead to contamination of surrounding waters.

Despite the risks to people and health in the Pacific, remediation has been slow. The 80th anniversary of WWII offers an opportunity to reflect on the toxic legacy of war – and to act.

The scale of the problem demands coordinated, well-funded action. The work should not just remove dangerous materials, but restore damaged ecosystems and monitor long-term health impacts.

Some support has been offered. It includes Operation Render Safe, a programme to remove war remnants led by the Australian Defence Force. But more is needed.

Regional partners – including Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the United States – have a chance to lead. This means investing in environmental cleanup, supporting affected communities and acknowledging historical responsibility.

It also means listening to Pacific voices, who have long called for greater attention to the war's toxic legacy. Their knowledge, resilience and lived experience must be central to any response. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

## Hunt on for missing Indonesia chopper with 8

**JAKARTA, 2 SEPT**

Efforts are ongoing to locate a helicopter that disappeared while flying over Indonesia's Borneo island, carrying eight people, including an Indian national. The Estindo Air BK 117 D3 helicopter lost contact on Monday near Mandin Damar Waterfall in South Kalimantan province, according to the Indonesian news agency Antara. Among the passengers was Indian national Santha Kumar, alongside Captain Haryanto, Eng Hendra, Mark Werren, Yudi Febrian, Andys Rissa Pasulu, Claudine Quito, and Iboy Irfan Rosa. I Putu Sudayana, head of Banjarmasin Search and Rescue Agency, stated that two helicopters are conducting aerial searches in shifts to ensure safety. A ground team of 140 personnel is also involved, covering a 27-square-kilometre search area. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

## Burkina Faso criminalises homosexuality

**OUAGADOUGOU, 2 SEPT**

Burkina Faso's parliament has passed a law banning homosexuality with offenders facing two to five years in prison, the state broadcaster reported late Monday. The amended family code was approved by the parliament on Monday in an unanimous vote that puts the code into effect more than a year after it was approved by the military government of Capt. Ibrahim Traore. Burkina Faso joins the list of more than half of Africa's 54 countries that have laws banning homosexuality with the penalties ranging from several years in prison to the death penalty. The laws, though criticised abroad, enjoy popularity in the countries where locals and officials have criticised homosexuality as behaviour imported from abroad and not a sexual orientation. *—PTI*

# Just 1 person survives Sudan landslide

## Impossible to send aid as the region struggles with one of the worst humanitarian conflicts

People gather after a landslide at a village in the Marra Mountains, Darfur region, western Sudan. The full extent of the disaster is still unclear due to the area's inaccessibility

***PHOTOS: X@NOSKHABAR_AE / SUDAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT/ARMY***

**JALALABAD, 2 SEPT**

Only one survivor was found after a devastating landslide wiped out the entire village of Tarasin in Sudan's Central Darfur, leaving over 1,000 people dead. The disaster struck on Sunday in the remote Marrah Mountains following days of heavy rainfall.

The Sudan Liberation Movement-Army (SLM-A), which controls the area, confirmed the death toll and described the village as "completely levelled to the ground."

The group has appealed to the United Nations and international aid agencies for urgent assistance to recover bodies.

Footage shared online showed a flattened area between mountain ranges, with people seen searching the rubble.

**1,000 people** were killed in one of Sudan's worst landslides. People flee to the mountain regions, often inaccessible by car, to escape the three year long civil-war

Access to the region remains nearly impossible due to ongoing fighting between Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), as well as severe humanitarian restrictions.

UN official Antoine Gérard told the BBC the full extent of the disaster is still unclear due to the area's inaccessibility.

Darfur's army-aligned governor, Minni Minnawi, called the event a "humanitarian tragedy that goes beyond the borders of the region."

The Marrah Mountains, a volcanic range rising over 3,000 metres and stretching 160 km southwest of el-Fasher, have become a refuge for thousands fleeing the ongoing civil war.

The conflict, which began in April 2023, has killed more than 40,000 people and displaced over 14 million. UN agencies have reported atrocities including ethnically motivated killings and rape, while the International Criminal Court is investigating potential war crimes.

Tarasin lies more than 900 km west of Khartoum in an area known for its cooler climate and higher rainfall.

While seasonal rains from July to October claim hundreds of lives each year, Sunday's landslide is among the deadliest natural disasters in Sudan's recent history.

Meanwhile, the head of the African Union Commission, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, called on the warring parties to "to silence the guns and unite in facilitating the swift and effective delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance to those in need".

Aid group Doctors Without Borders has warned that multiple communities in Darfur, including the Marrah Mountains, have been cut off after more than two years of war and isolation, describing these areas as "a black hole" in Sudan's humanitarian response. However, even humanitarian doctors and aid workers have been targeting in the war. *—PTI*

## AFGHAN QUAKE TOLL RISES TO 1,400

**JALALABAD, 2 SEPT**

The death toll from a major earthquake in eastern Afghanistan passed 1,400 on Tuesday, with more than 3,000 people injured, Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban government spokesman, said on X.

Rescuers are scrambling in a "race against time" to reach the mountainous and remote area devastated by Sunday's powerful 6.0 magnitude earthquake, a UN official said, warning of an exponential rise in the number of casualties.

The quake struck in several provinces, causing extensive damage. It flattened villages and trapped people under the rubble of homes that were constructed mostly of mud bricks and wood. Rough terrain is hampering rescue and relief efforts.

"We cannot afford to forget the people of Afghanistan who are facing multiple crises, multiple shocks, and the resilience of the communities has been saturated," said Indrika Ratwatte, the UN's resident coordinator for Afghanistan.

It is the third major earthquake since the Taliban seized power in 2021, and the latest crisis to beset Afghanistan, which is reeling from deep cuts to aid funding, a weak economy, and millions of people forcibly returned from Iran and Pakistan.

The Taliban government has appealed for assistance. *—PTI*

Local residents inspect the damage caused by Sunday's powerful 6.0-magnitude earthquake in eastern Afghanistan, Tuesday

***PHOTO: PTI***

# Belgium to recognise Palestine as a state

**DEIR AL-BALAH, 2 SEPT**

Belgium will recognise a Palestine state at the United Nations General Assembly in September, its Foreign Minister announced on Tuesday.

"Palestine will be recognised by Belgium at the UN session! And firm sanctions are being imposed against the Israeli government," Foreign Minister **Maxime Prevot** wrote on X.

### ISRAEL CALLS ON RESERVATIONISTS

Israel began mobilising tens of thousands of reservists on Tuesday as part of its plan to widen its genocide in Gaza City, which has sparked opposition domestically and condemnation abroad.

The reservist call-up will be gradual and include 60,000 personnel. It will also extend the service of an additional 20,000 already on active duty.

The beginning of September call-up, announced last month, comes as ground and air forces press forward and pursue more targets in northern and central Gaza, striking parts of Zeitoun and Shijaiyah — two western Gaza City neighbourhoods.

Zeitoun, once Gaza City's largest neighbourhood with markets, schools and clinics, has been transformed over the past month, with streets being emptied and buildings reduced to rubble as it becomes what Israel's military last week called a "dangerous combat zone."

Gaza's Health Ministry said on Tuesday that a total of 185 people died of malnutrition in August . *—PTI*

**HISTORIC TIES**

# 'Old friends' Xi and Putin sign a new gas pipeline deal

**BEIJING, 2 SEPT**

Chinese leader Xi Jinping welcomed Russian President Vladimir Putin as an "old friend" as the two held a series of meetings on Tuesday and signed a memorandum to build a massive oil pipeline. Relations between China and Russia have deepened in recent years, particularly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022.

Putin addressed Xi as "dear friend" and said that Moscow's ties with Beijing are "at an unprecedentedly high level." The two announced a series of deals.

The natural pipeline to China, which will go through the landlocked Mongolia, will reportedly supply 50 billion cubic meters of gas annually from western Russia to northern China. Putin and Xi also held a three-way meeting with Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh in Beijing ***PHOTO: PTI***

The deal is also a collective show of defiance against US President Donald Trump, who is pushing countries to cut Russian energy imports as part of his attempt to end the war in Ukraine.

China will also begin offering 30-day visa-free access to Russian travellers starting later this month.

China said it is neutral in the Ukraine war while providing an economic lifeline to Russia through trade.

*—PTI with agencies*

## Kim arrives in China ahead of Putin, Xi meet

**BEIJING, 2 SEPT**

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrived in Beijing on Tuesday, where he will be attending a military parade alongside his Chinese Premier Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday.

Kim arrived in an armoured train on Tuesday.

This is the first a North Korean leader has attended a Chinese military parade since 1959. Kim will be among 26 other heads of state - including leaders from Myanmar, Iran and Cuba.

China's missiles, fighter jets and other military hardware — some on public view for the first time — are set to displayed in a major parade in the nation's capital. However, the parade is reportedly meant for the foreign leaders.

Xi will also deliver a speech at the event, which marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. *—PTI with agencies*

Kim Jong-un ***PHOTO: PTI***

# Pak, China agree to deepen ties

**BEIJING, 2 SEPT**

Pakistan's Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir had his first meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, along with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, on Tuesday during which the two sides held wide-ranging talks on bilateral and regional cooperation.

Munir is part of Sharif's delegation, which participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin and will attend a grand parade of the Chinese army to be held on Wednesday to commemorate the 80th anniversary of World War II.

During the meeting, the two sides held wide-ranging talks on bilateral & regional cooperation, said Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, who was also part of the team.

The two sides should accelerate building an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, Xi said.

China stands ready to work with Pakistan to build upgraded versions of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement, Xi said.

Sharif hailed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI), proposed by Xi at the SCO summit and that Pakistan will fully support it.

Pakistan firmly sticks to the one-China principle, and looks forward to further strengthening the friendship, Sharif added. *—PTI*

# On Labour Day, thousands protest against Trump's policies

Protests erupted across major cities in the US against Trump's 'facist regime' and 'anti-working class' policies ***PHOTO: PTI***

**CHICAGO, 2 SEPT**

Protesters took to the streets in multiple US cities on Labour Day to criticise President Donald Trump and demand a living wage for workers.

Demonstrations in Chicago and New York were organised by One Fair Wage to draw attention to the struggles laborers face in the US, where the federal minimum wage is USD 7.25 an hour. Chants of "Trump must go now!" echoed outside the President's former home in New York, while protesters gathered outside a different Trump Tower in Chicago, yelling "No National Guard" and "Lock him up!" Large crowds also gathered in Washington DC and San Francisco.

In New York, people gathered outside Trump Tower, which has become a magnet for protests and remains a prominent symbol of the President's wealth. Demonstrators waved signs and banners calling for an end to a "fascist regime".

In Washington, a large crowd gathered with signs saying "Stop the ICE invasion" and an umbrella painted with "Free DC. No masked thugs."

Multiple groups joined together at the protests in Chicago to listen to speeches and lend their voices.

Along the West Coast from San Diego up to Seattle, hundreds gathered at rallies to call for a stop to the "billionaire takeover." *—PTI*

## Trump to give ex-NYC mayor Prez award

Trump said he will award former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honour, two days after his long-time political ally was seriously injured in a car crash. The decision places the award on a man once lauded for leading New York after the 9/11 attacks and later sanctioned by courts and disbarred for amplifying false claims about the 2020 election.

## Trump asks firms to release Covid drug data

Trump demanded that pharmaceutical companies release data on the success rates of their Covid drugs in order to clear up the discrepancy "mess". Trump said he's seen extraordinary data from Pfizer and others in private, but wondered why it was never made public. "I want them to show them NOW, to CDC and the public, and clear up this MESS, one way or the other!"

## Don mulls declaring a nat'l housing crisis

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the Trump administration may declare a national housing emergency this fall as the White House looks to highlight issues for the midterm campaign. Bessent said housing affordability would be a critical leg of Republicans' 2026 strategy.

## Guyana heads to polls as candidates battle for oil, wealth control

**GEORGETOWN, 1 SEPT**

Thousands of voters turned out for what many consider Guyana's most significant election in decades, with control over $10 billion in annual offshore oil revenues at stake. Once reliant on gold, sugar, and rice, Guyana now produces nearly 900,000 barrels of oil daily, contributing to the world's fastest-growing economy. The ballot featured six parties, but most attention focused on the governing Indo-dominated People's Progressive Party (PPP) led by President of Guyana Irfaan Ali, the Afro-supported A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), and a new party, We Invest In Nationhood (WIN), led by US -sanctioned businessman Azruddin Mohamed.

Guyana President Mohamed Irfaan Ali appealed for a second term, "We ask you to trust us once more to deliver greater, better, faster and more efficiently." *—PTI*

**WAR ON DRUGS?**

# *Venezuela ready for war, says Prez as US deploys navy*

**CARACAS, 1 SEPT**

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro said he "would constitutionally declare a republic in arms" if the South American country was attacked by the US, which he claimed had deployed eight military vessels with 1,200 missiles were targeting his country

His comments during a Monday news conference come as the US government this week is set to boost its maritime force in the waters off Venezuela to combat threats from Latin American drug cartels. The US has not signalled any planned land incursion. Still, Maduro's government has responded by deploying troops along its coast and border with neighbouring Colombia, as well as by urging Venezuelans to enlist in a civilian militia.

"They are seeking a regime change," Maduro said. He described the US deployment as "the biggest threat that has been seen on our continent in the last 100 years."

"In the face of this maximum military pressure, we have declared maximum preparedness," Maduro said.

The deployment comes as President Donald Trump has pushed for using the military to thwart cartels he blames for the flow of fentanyl and other illicit drugs into US.

Maduro warned that US action would "stain" Trump's "hands with blood."

He called Secretary of State Marco Rubio a "warlord".

Maduro also insisted that he was the legitimate winner of last year's presidential election.

But ample and credible evidence has shown the contrary, prompting several countries, including the US, to not recognise Maduro as Venezuela's President. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

## RBI appoints R Gandhi as Yes Bank Chairman

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Private sector lender Yes Bank on Tuesday said the Reserve Bank of India has approved the reappointment of former RBI Deputy Governor R Gandhi as non-executive chairman of the bank. The RBI, through its letter dated 1 September, 2025, has approved the re-appointment of Rama Subramaniam Gandhi as part-time Chairman of the bank for a further period from 20 September, 2025, to 13 May, 2027, at a remuneration approved by the RBI, Yes Bank said in a regulatory filing. He served as the Deputy Governor of RBI for three years from 2014 to 2017. Gandhi had a three-year secondment to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the capital market regulator. *—PTI*

## JSW halts sourcing plans of coking coal from Mongolia

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

JSW Steel has suspended its plan to source coking coal from Mongolia, citing significant logistical hurdles in transporting the material to India. Coking coal is a vital raw material for steel production via the blast furnace route. India, the world's second-largest steel producer, imports over 80-90 per cent of its coking coal needs, with Australia being the dominant supplier. Dependence on distant sources results in longer shipping times and higher logistics costs. The government has been exploring ways to diversify import sources and assess transport routes from Mongolia. Meanwhile, JSW Steel will continue sourcing from existing suppliers as India promotes domestic exploration and low-carbon steelmaking under its decarbonisation roadmap. *—PTI*

## Sebi introduces new framework for intraday index

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has introduced a new framework to monitor intraday positions in equity index derivatives, aimed at reducing excessive risk-taking and ensuring orderly market trading. Effective 1 October, Sebi has capped the net intraday position in index options at Rs 5,000 crore per entity, compared to the existing end-of-day limit of Rs 1,500 crore. The gross intraday position will remain restricted to Rs 10,000 crore, applicable separately to long and short positions. According to Sebi, the framework seeks to strike a balance between trading flexibility and risk management, while facilitating smooth market-making activity on all trading days. Stock exchanges will take at least four random intraday snapshots, including one during the high-activity period between 2.45pm and 3.30pm. *—PTI*

# GST Council to meet today, call for steep levies on EVs

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The GST Council will meet for two days from Wednesday to discuss a major overhaul of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, with likely rate cuts on essential items and a push to simplify the tax structure.

A key debate will focus on the tax treatment of electric vehicles. The Centre favours a 5 per cent GST for all EVs to push adoption, while the Group of Ministers (GoM) recommends 18 per cent for EVs priced up to Rs 40 lakh. Additionally, the panel has proposed a 28 per cent GST on EVs priced above USD 46,000 (approx. Rs 38 lakh), citing that these cater to the "upper segment" and are largely imported, affecting carmakers like Tesla, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, and BYD.

PHOTO: PTI

Chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Council will consider the Centre's 'next-gen' GST reform, proposing a shift to just two tax slabs, 5 and 18 per cent, by merging the current 12 and 28 per cent brackets. A special 40 per cent rate is also proposed for luxury and demerit goods.

Under the plan, common-use food items like ghee, drinking water (20-litre), namkeen, nuts, some footwear, and medicines may move from 12 to 5 per cent. Items such as pencils, umbrellas, bicycles, and hairpins are also likely to shift to the lower slab. Electronic goods like TVs, refrigerators, and washing machines could see rates drop from 28 to 18 per cent, making them cheaper.

Luxury goods like SUVs, pan masala, tobacco, and cigarettes may attract the new 40 per cent slab, with potential additional levies. Opposition-ruled states want this surcharge to be shared with states to offset revenue loss.

Eight opposition states are expected to meet ahead of the Council session to coordinate their stance, as they argue the rejig may reduce state revenues. Centre contends lower rates will boost consumption and balance out losses over time. *—PTI*

# PM says chip projects worth $18B underway

## Says semiconductor chips are digital diamonds

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said 10 semiconductor projects worth over USD 18 billion are underway and the country is advancing towards the next phase of the India Semiconductor Mission and revamping the design-linked incentive scheme to tap $1 trillion global chip market.

"The day is not far when the smallest chip made in India will drive the biggest change in the world," he said. "The day is not far when the world will say -- Designed in India, Made in India, Trusted by the World." He was speaking at the inauguration of the 'Semicon India - 2025' conference, aimed at catalysing India's semiconductor ecosystem, here.

Noting the presence of semiconductor sector experts from across the globe, with representation from around 50 countries, Modi emphasized that India's innovation and youth power are also visibly present at the event.

Stating that in the world of semiconductors, it is often said, "Oil was black gold, but chips are digital diamonds", the Prime Minister said that while oil shaped the previous century, the power of the 21st century is now concentrated in the small chip.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw during 'Semicon India 2025' at Yashobhoomi, in New Delhi PHOTO: PTI

**Industry leaders, you should also come to India because we are now on a path to becoming a product nation. You will grow with India's growth**

-Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister

Additionally,in a veiled rebuttal to the 'dead economy' jibe, Modi said the Indian economy grew 7.8 per cent in the first quarter, surpassing all expectations despite global uncertainties and challenges driven by economic self-interest. He said GDP growth in April-June was better than 'every expectation, hope and estimate'. *—PTI*

**SBI RATED BBB-(EXP)**

# SBI to raise $1B via dollar debt bonds

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, has entered the international debt market to raise up to $1B through a dollar bond issuance under its $10B medium-term note programme. The move comes after S&P Global Ratings recently upgraded India's sovereign rating to BBB with a stable outlook the first such improvement in 18 years which also resulted in an upgrade of SBI's own rating.

SBI is issuing five-year dollar-denominated bonds and aims to raise at least $500M, with the option to scale up to $1B depending on investor demand and pricing. The bank has provided an initial guidance of US Treasury yield plus 105 basis points (bps), but investment bankers expect the final pricing to come below 100 bps amid strong interest from global investors.

Despite sitting on Rs 12 trillion in lendable liquidity, SBI is stepping up fundraising to support future growth. In July, the bank raised Rs 25,000 crore via a qualified institutional placement (QIP), the largest ever through this route. Its Q1 FY25 performance remained robust, with gross advances up 11.6 per cent to Rs 42.55 trillion, led by growth in personal, SME and agricultural loans, while corporate lending stayed muted.

PHOTO: ANI

- SBI is issuing five-year dollar-denominated bonds and aims to raise at least $500M, with the option to scale up to $1B depending on investor demand and pricing

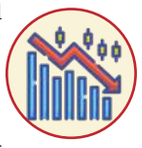
Additionlly, Fitch Ratings has assigned a 'BBB-(EXP)' rating to the State Bank of India's (SBI) proposed issuance of US dollar-denominated bonds. Concurrently, S&P Global Ratings also granted a 'BBB' long-term issue rating for the senior unsecured notes from SBI's London branch, although the amount raised through the issuance remains unspecified. *—Agencies*

## Rupee hits record low of 88.18 against US dollar

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

The rupee declined 8 paise to close at an all-time low of 88.18 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as Indo-US trade deal uncertainty and weak domestic equity markets pressurised the local unit.

Forex traders said the rupee is trading near all-time low levels as risks remained skewed to the downside amid uncertainty over US trade tariffs.



Moreover, persistent foreign fund outflows or dollar strength could drive further weakness, they added.

On Monday, the rupee revisited its all-time intra-day low of 88.33 against the American currency.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened weak at 88.14 against the US dollar, then lost further ground to an intraday low of 88.20.

The rupee finally settled for the day at 88.18 (provisional) against the US dollar, down 8 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee closed at a record low of 88.10 against the US dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.63 per cent to 98.38. *—PTI*

**DRAGGED PROFIT-TAKING**

# Markets end lower ahead of GST council meeting

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

Reversing its early gains, benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 206 points on Tuesday due to last-hour profit-taking in banking and auto shares amid caution ahead of the GST Council meeting.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 206.61 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 80,157.88 with 16 of its components ending lower and 14 with gains. The barometer opened higher and traded with gains till late afternoon session. However, profit-taking at the fag-end dragged the index down by 752.64 points from the day's high of 80,761.14.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 45.45 points or 0.18 per cent to 24,579.60. During the day, it hit a high of 24,756.10 and a low of 24,522.35.

Among Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints, Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank, Tata Motors and Larsen & Toubro closed with losses.

However, Power Grid, NTPC, Tata Steel and Hindustan Unilever were the major gainers.

PHOTO: PTI

The GST Council is meeting in New Delhi for two days beginning 3 September to discuss the proposed pruning of rates.

The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.64 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.27 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, bankex dropped the most by 0.68 per cent, followed by telecommunication (0.59 per cent), financial services (0.44 per cent), teck (0.28 per cent) and consumer durables (0.13 per cent).

Power jumped 1.62 per cent, followed by utilities (1.47 per cent), FMCG (1.12 per cent), metal (0.90 per cent), realty (0.67 per cent) and energy (0.65 per cent). *—PTI*

# Gold, silver hit all-time highs on tariff woes

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Gold price stayed firm for the seventh consecutive session and added Rs 400 to hit a fresh peak of Rs 1,06,070 per 10g in the national capital on Tuesday amid unabated chase for safe-haven assets triggered by sweeping US tariffs and tumbling rupee against American currency.

The price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity also increased Rs 400 to hit a new record of Rs 1,05,200 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Tuesday. It had settled at Rs 1,04,800 per 10g in the previous market session.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Gold has added Rs 5,900 per 10g in the past seven sessions.

**Silver scale new peak**

Rising for the fifth consecutive session, silver prices on Tuesday climbed Rs 588 to hit a fresh peak of Rs 1,25,249 per kilogram in futures trade, lifted by expectations of a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve this month and robust demand in overseas markets.

On the MCX, the silver futures for the December contract rallied Rs 588 or 0.47 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 1,25,249 per kg in the morning trade. *—PTI*

# Urban Company, boAT gets Sebi approval for IPOs

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

As many as thirteen companies, including Urban Company, which offers app-based beauty and home services, and Imagine Marketing, parent of the wearables brand boAt, have received the approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to launch their initial public offerings (IPOs). SEBI's update on Tuesday revealed these firms submitted their preliminary IPO papers between March and June and received clearance during 1-29 August.

PHOTO: PTI

- SEBI's update revealed these firms submitted their preliminary IPO papers between March and June and received clearance during 1-29 August

The combined fundraising goal for these companies exceeds Rs 15,000 crore, aimed at business expansion, debt repayment, and providing exit opportunities for the existing shareholders. Urban Company plans to raise Rs 1,900 crore through its IPO, including a fresh issue of Rs 429 crore and an Offer For Sale (OFS) of Rs 1,471 crore from investors like Accel India and Elevation Capital.

Imagine Marketing, targeting Rs 2,000 crore, filed its draft papers in April under a confidential pre-filing route. Other notable companies include Juniper Green Energy, seeking Rs 3,000 crore, and Jain Resource Recycling, aiming for Rs 2,000 crore.

Mouri Tech, Ravi Infrabuild Projects, and Pace Digitek have also outlined substantial IPO plans. *—PTI*

# Salesforce slashes 4,000 jobs amid AI move

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Salesforce, the American cloud software giant, has announced a significant reduction in its customer support workforce, cutting 4,000 jobs as it increasingly relies on artificial intelligence to streamline operations. CEO Marc Benioff confirmed the downsizing on the Logan Bartlett Podcast, revealing that the support team has been reduced from 9,000 to 5,000 staffs.

This decision marks a notable shift from Benioff's previous assertions only two months prior, when he argued that AI would enhance human roles rather than replace them. In July, he dismissed concerns over job losses, emphasising the necessity of human oversight in AI operations.

Despite the cuts, Salesforce's AI integration extends beyond customer support; company is also leveraging AI in sales. Benioff noted the elimination of a backlog of over 100 million uncalled sales leads, with an "omnichannel supervisor" now overseeing task distribution between humans & AI agents.

With over 76,000 employees, the recent layoffs represent about 5 per cent of Salesforce's global workforce, signalling rapid shifts in corporate strategy due to AI advancements. *—Agencies*

**40 YEARS IN VAIN?**

# *Nestlé fires CEO over 'romantic relationship' with employee*

**WASHINGTON, 2 SEPT**

Swiss food giant Nestlé said Monday it dismissed its CEO **Laurent Freixe** after an investigation into an undisclosed relationship with a direct subordinate.

The maker of Nescafé drinks and Purina pet food said in a statement the dismissal was effective immediately. An investigation found the undisclosed romantic relationship with a direct subordinate violated Nestlé's code of conduct.

Freixe, who had been CEO for a year, will be replaced by Philipp Navratil, a longtime Nestlé executive.

"This was a necessary decision," said Chairman Paul Bulcke. "Nestlé's values and governance are strong foundations of our company."

- An investigation found the undisclosed romantic relationship with a direct subordinate violated Nestlé's code of conduct

The company didn't give any other details about the investigation.

Freixe had been with Nestlé since 1986, holding roles around the world. When Nestlé revamped its geographic structure in January 2022, Freixe became CEO of Zone Latin America. In August 2024, he was tapped to replace then-CEO Mark Schneider in top role on 1 September, 2024.

Navratil started his career with Nestlé in 2001 as an internal auditor and served in a variety of roles in Central America. In 2020, he joined Nestlé's Coffee Strategic Business Unit, and in 2024, he became CEO of Nestlé's Nes presso division. *—PTI*

# TCS rolls out 4.5-7% salary hikes for 80% of staff

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

Country's largest IT services company TCS has rolled out salary hikes in the range of 4.5–7 per cent for a majority of its employees, sources said on Tuesday.

The Tata group company has started sending the letters of increment to the employees from late Monday evening, and the increments will be applicable from September, they said.

An official response to an email query sent to the company was awaited.

It can be noted that there has been a slew of headlines on the Human Resources front over the last two months, starting with an announcement to defer pay hikes amid hazy market conditions.

This was followed up with a surprise announcement to axe 2 per cent of the workforce, or around 12,000 employees, and then came an announcement of pay hikes for 80 per cent of the employees.

PHOTO: ANI

As per media reports, most of the employees eligible for the hike were in the lower to mid levels of the hierarchy.

The sources said the top performers have been given pay hikes of over 10 per cent as well. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/@ISAK

## Isak completes blockbuster Liverpool move

**LONDON, 2 SEPT**

Liverpool saved the biggest transfer until last in its remarkable $570 million summer spree, finally signing Alexander Isak from Newcastle for a British-record fee as the window closed on Monday with spending by Premier League clubs soaring beyond $4 billion. The biggest saga of Europe's summer transfer window ended with Isak completing his dream move to the English champion for 125 million pounds ($170 million), with the deal announced in the final throes of a chaotic deadline day. "I feel amazing. It's been a long journey to get here," said Isak, who effectively went on strike at Saudi-controlled Newcastle over the summer as he agitated for a move to Anfield.—*PTI*

## Marseille signs World Cup winner Benjamin Pavard

**MARSEILLE, 2 SEPT**

Marseille pulled off the biggest move of deadline day in Ligue 1 by signing 2018 World Cup winner Benjamin Pavard from Inter Milan on Monday. Marseille said the French defender joined on loan, and the deal includes a purchase option. According to L'Equipe newspaper, it was set at 15 million euros ($17.5 million). The 29-year-old Pavard had been playing in Italy since 2023. He returns to the French league for the first time since leaving Lille in 2016. Pavard then spent three seasons at Stuttgart and won multiple titles over four seasons with Bayern Munich. Pavard became the fourth 2018 World Cup winner to join the French league this summer, following Olivier Giroud (Lille), Paul Pogba (Monaco), and Florian Thauvin (Lens).—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

## BCCI invites applications for new title sponsor

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) invited applications on Tuesday for a new title sponsor for the Indian cricket team."Board of Control for Cricket in India announces the release of the Invitation for Expression of Interest for National Team Lead Sponsor Rights," the board said in a statement.The change comes after Dream11 informed the BCCI that it would no longer be able to continue as a sponsor, following a parliamentary law that banned real-money-based online gaming.Dream11 had a US$44 million (approximately Rs 358 crore) deal with the BCCI running from 2023 to 2026. Together with My11Circle, another fantasy sports platform, the two companies contributed nearly INR 1,000 crore—*PTI*

## Sreesanth's insurance claim: RR dragged to SC

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Rajasthan Royals were dragged to the Supreme Court over a 2012 case involving S Sreesanth. The case is regarding an insurance claim made by Rajasthan Royals over an injury sustained by Sreesanth that ruled him out of the season. While the Royals claim that Sreesanth's participation in the 2012 season was impacted due to a knee injury, the United India Insurance Company believes that the player was already carrying a toe injury, which would've prevented him from participating in the league that season anyway.—*PTI*

# India look to lift game against dangerous Korea

### India and Korea clash in their first Super 4 stage match

**RAJGIR, 2 SEPT**

PHOTO: PTI

Buoyed by an unbeaten pool campaign, a confident and determined Indian men's hockey team will need to lift its game a notch against title-holders and five-time champions Korea when the two sides clash in their first Super 4 stage match of the Asia Cup here on Wednesday.

The Indians finished Pool A engagements with an all-win record, beating China 4-3, Japan 3-2, before demolishing minnows Kazakhstan 15-0 on Monday.

But the results hardly speak of the way India had started the campaign, scraping past China and Japan before the swashbuckling win over Kazakhstan, who were in the tournament for just the second time ever.

But India can take solace from the big win after two scratchy games.

It will also help that the tournament's most successful team, Korea, hasn't looked at its best so far, having finished second in Pool B behind Malaysia. The Koreans were favourites to top but got a rude shock when Malaysia defeated them 4-1.

They have struggled in the sweltering heat and high humidity here during afternoon matches, but with the Super 4 games starting in the evening, one can expect them to lift their game after the rest day on Tuesday.

In Monday's match, every aspect of the game was played well by India, be it goalkeeping, defence, midfield, or attacks.

The most heartening was the performance of the forward line, with Abhishek stealing the limelight with four goals.

Besides the goals, what was more pleasing to see was Abhishek's positioning and first-time strikes when he got the ball inside the circle.

Sukhjeet Singh, who also scored a hat-trick, was another player who sparkled with his pacy dribbling from the flanks and the sense of calm inside the 'D'.

The experienced Mandeep Singh has been expectedly brilliant with his stick-work in the tournament so far.

The only sticking point in India's forward line remains Dilpreet Singh, who scored on Monday but also missed a sitter. He has been struggling in the tournament so far and needs to pull himself up.

**THE MATCH STARTS @ 7:30 PM**

Needless to say, India's chief coach Craig Fulton was happy with his strikers' overall performance.

"Going into the Super 4s, you want your strikers connecting and scoring goals," Fulton said.

India's midfield has been led brilliantly by veteran Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Sumit, and the young Rajinder Singh. —*PTI*

**RETIRES FROM T20IS**

## Starc extends his Test and ODI cricket career

**BRISBANE, 2 SEPT**

Veteran Australian fast bowler Mitchell Starc has retired from Twenty20 international cricket in a bid to extend his career in the Tests and ODI formats.

Starc and Test skipper Pat Cummins, two members of Australia's long-serving pace bowling triumvirate, were missing from the national T20 squad announced Tuesday for a three-game series in New Zealand starting Oct. 1.

The 35-year-old Starc, who took 79 wickets in 65 T20 internationals for Australia, said Test cricket was his priority and he needed to prepare for an intense international schedule over the next two years.

Cummins has been rested since the test series in the Caribbean last month and has experienced some lower back pain, limiting his preparation for the Ashes series against England starting in November.

Starc wants to be at full fitness for the Ashes and test series in India next year and the next ODI World Cup in 2027, and decided something had to give.

"I have loved every minute of every T20 game I have played for Australia, particularly the 2021 World Cup, not just because we won but the incredible group and the fun along the way," he said.

"Looking ahead (T20 retirement) is my best way forward to remain fresh, fit, and at my best for those campaigns.

"It also gives the bowling group time to prepare for the T20 World Cup in the matches leading into that tournament." —*PTI*

Mitchell Starc PHOTO: X/@CRICAUSTRALIA

Naomi Osaka PHOTO: X/@USOPEN

SINNER PHOTO: X/@USOPEN

## Osaka crushes Gauff as Sinner, Iga roll into Quarters

**NEW YORK, 2 SEPT**

IGA SWIATEK PHOTO: X/@USOPEN

Naomi Osaka delivered a statement win at the US Open by thrashing home favourite Coco Gauff in the last 16 on Monday as Jannik Sinner and Iga Swiatek charged into the quarter-finals. The Japanese star powered past third seed Gauff 6-3, 6-2 in a highly-anticipated but lopsided fourth-round showdown of former US Open champions on the Labor Day holiday in New York. Osaka broke in the very first game in front of an expectant Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd and was untouchable on serve in a ruthless display against a misfiring Gauff, who hit 33 unforced errors.

"This is my favourite court in the world and it means so much to me to be back today," said Osaka, who looks primed for a tilt at a fifth Grand Slam.

"This is kind of uncharted territory at this point in my career," added Osaka. I'm just enjoying it. I'm having fun."

The 27-year-old, a two-time US Open champion, is enjoying her deepest run at a major since winning her second Australian Open title in 2021. It has been a painstaking climb back towards the top of the game for Osaka, who returned to tennis last year following the birth of her daughter in 2023.

"I was in the stands two months after I gave birth watching Coco, and I just really wanted an opportunity to come out here and play," said Osaka, who also beat a 15-year-old Gauff at the US Open in their first meeting in 2019.

Gauff conceded the mental toll of a challenging first week, and the efforts to remodel her faltering serve had weighed heavily on her.

"I think emotionally how much this week was, I think today I just stepped in, and I maybe was a little bit empty," she said.

Osaka plays the Czech 11th seed Karolina Muchova in Wednesday's quarter-finals. Muchova beat Ukrainian 27th seed Marta Kostyuk 6-3, 6-7 (0/7), 6-3 and is seeking a third straight semi-final at Flushing Meadows.

Reigning men's champion Sinner obliterated the unpredictable Alexander Bublik 6-1, 6-1, 6-1 in just 81 minutes to start the night session.

Bublik, the only player to beat Sinner this season aside from Carlos Alcaraz, had not dropped serve all tournament but was broken eight times by the world number one. —*PTI*

**ASIA CUP 2025**

## Gill eager to prove a point with aggressive approach: Irfan

**MUMBAI, 2 SEPT**

Shubman Gill's return as T20 vice-captain ahead of the Asia Cup would do a 'world of good' to the Indian team in the longer run, said former all-rounder Irfan Pathan on Tuesday, adding that the 25-year-old will look to prove a point with his aggressive batting.

Gill made a comeback to the shortest format for the continental tournament following a successful debut series as Test captain, and Pathan said it isn't something that would put pressure on incumbent leader Suryakumar Yadav.

Pathan revealed Rohit Sharma, who has retired from T20Is and Tests, has expressed his wish to continue playing ODIs for as long as possible, but said getting game-time will be a challenge for the former captain and even Virat Kohli. "This new (fitness) test is obviously not easy, so once you're able to clear it, that means your fitness is top-notch. I had a long call with him as well as far as just to know about his plans; he's very keen. He wants to make sure that he continues playing," Pathan said.

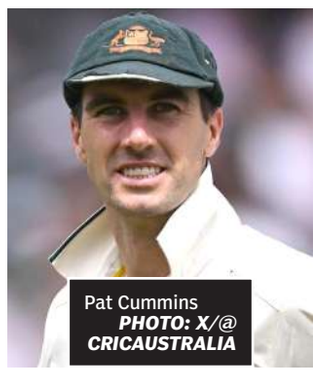
"This selection of being vice-captain of Shubman Gill without the consent of Surya Kumar Yadav would not have happened," Pathan said in an interaction organised by Sony Sports."His (Suryakumar's) responsibility is not only to perform, not only to actually look after the team, but at the same time grow leadership, grow the team, and he has started (doing) that.—*PTI*

SHUBMAN GILL PHOTO: PTI

### South Africa win by 7 wickets

South African bowlers put in a terrific bowling performance to bundle out England for a paltry score of 131 in the first ODI of the series at Headingley. South Africa won by 7 wickets. Aiden Markram scored 86, and Rashid took 3 wickets.

Spinner Keshav Maharaj took four wickets, and all-rounder Wiaan Mulder scalped three, as England lasted only 24.3 overs. England lost their last six wickets for just 24 runs, going from 107/4 to 131 all out. For England, opener Jamie Smith was the only performer with 54.



Pat Cummins PHOTO: X/@CRICAUSTRALIA

## PAT CUMMINS RULED OUT OF INDIA, NZ WHITE-BALL SERIES

**MELBOURNE, 2 SEPT**

Australia's premier pacer and Test skipper Pat Cummins was on Tuesday ruled out of the upcoming white-ball series against India and New Zealand due to a lower-back issue, with Cricket Australia saying that his "rehabilitation" is being managed keeping the Ashes in mind.

Australia face New Zealand in three T20Is from October 1 before hosting India for three ODIs (19-25 October ) and five T20Is (29 October to 8 November). The home Ashes campaign begins against England in Perth on 21 November.

"Cummins won't be considered for the upcoming limited-overs series against India (or New Zealand) and will continue his rehabilitation plan with a return to bowling to be determined as part of his Ashes preparation," read CA's statement.

The 32-year-old bowled more than 95 overs across four Tests in the UK and the Caribbean this winter before experiencing back pain.

His medical scans revealed "a level of lumbar bone stress" that CA says will "require further management" in the build-up to the marquee Ashes.

It is a recurrence of the back issue that troubled Cummins early in his career, raising concerns over whether he can withstand the hectic Ashes that have five Tests in seven weeks. —*PTI*

## Parvej gets a 6-year ban for doping

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

Indian middle-distance runner Parvej Khan has received a six-year ban for testing positive for a banned substance and missing three dope tests within 12 months.

Last year, Parvej had made a big impact with his feats in the American collegiate athletics before testing positive for erythropoietin (EPO) at the National Inter-State championships at Panchkula, Haryana, after which he was provisionally suspended. —*PTI*

**KHELO INDIA WATER SPORTS**

Mohsin Ali, a local shikarawalla who won a gold medal in the men's 1000m kayaking race on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

**BRONZE AT WORLD C'SHIPS**

## *Feels like redemption after Olympic pain: Chirag*

**NEW DELHI, 2 SEPT**

"It feels like redemption," says Chirag Shetty, one half of the celebrated SatChi combo that ensured that India did not go medal-less at the just-concluded World Badminton Championship in Paris, the city where the two endured the biggest heartbreak of their career.

Chirag and his longtime partner Satwiksairaj Rankireddy won the men's doubles bronze last week. The world No. 9 pair notched up a commanding win over Malaysia's two-time Olympic medallists Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik in the quarter-finals to secure what was their second World Championships medal.

However, their bid to become the first Indian men's doubles pair to reach the final ended with a defeat to China's 11th seeds Chen Bo Yang and Liu Yi in the semi-finals.

"I think that winning against Aaron is definitely very special. More than winning the medal, just knowing for a fact that if we play the right game tactically, we can beat anyone. We've not had a very handsome record against them lately, especially at both the Olympics," Chirag told PTI on Tuesday.

"So winning that match in two straight games definitely gave us a huge boost and also was a sort of redemption for last year's Olympic Games, where we played in the same arena and on the same court. So yeah, it feels really special."

A year ago, Satwik and Chirag had endured the pain of missing out on a medal at the Olympics after their campaign was cut short by the Malaysian duo.

The bronze medal helped Satwik and Chirag join Saina Nehwal (2) and PV Sindhu (5) as the only Indians to win multiple medals at the World Championships. —*PTI*

CHIRAG SHETTY PHOTO: PTI

## Pak cricketer Asif Ali retires from Int'l cricket

**LAHORE, 2 SEPT**

Pakistan's middle-order batter in white-ball cricket, Asif Ali, on Tuesday announced his retirement from international cricket.

The 33-year-old from Faisalabad, who played in two editions of the T20I World Cups, in 2021 and 2022, and also represented his country in the Men's ODI World Cup in England in 2019, said wearing the Pakistan jersey was the "proudest chapter" in his professional career.

Asif, though, said he will continue to play domestic and franchise league cricket around the world.

"Today, I announce my retirement from international cricket. Wearing the Pakistan jersey has been the greatest honour of my life, and serving my country on the cricket field has been my proudest chapter," said Asif in a social media post.

The right-handed batter represented Pakistan in 21 ODIs and 58 T20Is, scoring 959 runs, including three half-centuries. He featured in the ODI Asia Cup in 2018 and the T20I Asia Cup in 2022, and also took part in the Hangzhou Asian Games in 2023, which was a T20I event. —*PTI*

Asif Ali PHOTO: PTI